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ANGLING IN BRITISH ART THROUGH
FIVE CENTURIES



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SKETCH PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG SALMON FISHER. ALEC McCULLOCH. Painted in Norway, about twenty years ago, by J. S. SARGENT, R.A. Size 27in. x 22in. Reproduced by permission of Alec McCulloch, Esq.

ANGLING IN BRITISH ART

THROUGH FIVE CENTURIES: PRINTS, PICTURES, BOOKS

By WALTER SHAW SPARROW

WITH A FOREWORD BY H. T. SHERINGHAM

AND TWO HUNDRED ILLUSTRATIONS, INCLUDING

THIRTY-NINE IN COLOUR



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First published in 1923.

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FOREWORD

FROM AN OPEN LETTER TO THE AUTHOR

—Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken ;
Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

THIS is a wonderful world. The older it gets the more new things do we discover in it, or, perhaps I should say, the more new things are there open to our discovery if our eyes are open also. As a rule, of course, there are mists about all our ways, and the clear light of amazement cannot always break through.

But when it does there is matter for rejoicing. I suppose that I may claim to have travelled in the realms of gold, following the river valleys, as much as most people of our generation, and to have studied one aspect of their life, the piscatory, more closely than a good many other voyagers, while I have written verbose impressions of my travels here and there for many years. There was, I should have said, nothing *de re piscatoria* which could come to me as a *complete* surprise. A new record from time to time, some such discovery, for instance, as that the Aztecs anticipated Mr. G. E. M. Skues in the "minor tactics" revelation, or that the spring salmon started on its 150 mile journey up-stream nine months before it was necessary to do so simply because at some earlier geological epoch its ancestors had a journey of 1,500 miles to perform—anything of this kind would give me great pleasure and some

excitement, but it would not astonish me into speechlessness. These things are the ordinary rewards of research inspired by speculation.

When it comes, however, to a sudden realization that there is a very important general aspect of the sport of angling which was awaiting a discoverer I must own to feeling as did Keats when he first looked into Chapman's *Homer*. But there is a shade to my sensations which did not darken the brightness of his. There was no need for him to feel ashamed !

You ask : Have I, and the rest of us who have written about angling as a branch of human activity with its roots in culture as well as in hunger, "believed that the graphic and pictorial arts, since 1496, have had only one good thing to do for [our] sport, namely, to adorn books on fishing with prints and plates ? "

What can I reply, save "Alas, and Alack ! " ? And my tone must be the more doleful because I have had absolutely no excuse. In my humble, uninstructed way I have from my youth up loved pictures and drawings as an essential part of life. Concurrently I have loved fishing as another essential part of life. But it has never till now been revealed to me that men like Crome, De Wint, Cotman, or David Cox—to name a few who inspire my special veneration—are really as important in the true history of angling as men like Scrope or Andrew Lang.

You are, of course, absolutely right in your diagnosis of the myopy which has afflicted me and the rest of us. We have been hampered by the conventional notion that "angling in art" must show the jungle-cock in exactly the right place in the salmon fly's wing as the fisherman drops it precisely on yon side the stream. Moreover "she" must not be too "drumly" for the fly, and the salmon which leaps in the middle distance must not have more than eleven scales "counting from the posterior margin of the adipose fin to the medial line in an oblique series forwards."

If by some mischance a figure by some waterside carries an object which looks more like a punt-pole than a fly-rod we have dismissed it from our angling meditations. The fact that the painter has given us the secret of one of God's own days in one of His own valleys in Eden has somehow failed to reach our souls. That punt-pole, which really, when one comes to look closer, is probably a hay-rake, has removed the picture

from our world altogether. For the function of painting is illustration not revelation!

* * * * *

I have just been standing in the middle of my drawing-room looking at its walls in the light cast upon them by your book. There hang there, I find, forty-one pictures. Of these twenty-four are oil-paintings and seventeen are water-colours. Ten out of the total are decorative studies or portraits. All the rest, thirty-one in number, are landscape work, actual or idealized, and in twenty-two of these the prominent feature is *water*. Water, it seems almost necessary to state (in a confession like this), is the element in which fishes live, and from which we anglers endeavour to extract them. For us, at any rate, Pindar's "ἄριστον μὲν ὕδωρ" is an abiding truth. Water is the first and best of things in piscatory affairs. And it does not now matter whether it be salt or fresh. In these days we have come to appreciate the fact that the bass is nearly as good a fighter as the salmon, that the mullet has as massive a brain as the carp, that the whiting or pouting will bite as fast as the roach. So water is our element wherever found. And any picture which reproduces it, whether the painter had fishing in mind or no, must inevitably make an angler who studies it come sooner or later to the thought of fish.

Let me go a step further than this. Having analysed the liquid capacity of those thirty-one pictures, I looked carefully at the nine which seemed to have none. One shows an old seventeenth-century garden in all its sumptuous formality of rectangles, statuary, box edging, and so on. It is the sort of garden in which our ancestors aired silk attire—in fact, some of them are doing so in the painting. At its northern end (it *must* have observed the compass tradition in its disposition) there is an ornate fountain. This in itself would not constitute liquid capacity, so I have not included the picture among the water-scapes. But, now I come to think of it, I have never looked at that lovely old garden without wondering where the fish ponds were, and fondly imagining that it might be part of the identical demesne for which the Hon. Roger North composed *A Discourse of Fish and Fish Ponds* in the year 1713.

Of the remaining eight pictures, one shows an old French château, which always makes me think of *The Three Musketeers*, and the others are pure landscape—woodland, mountain, or down. There is no water visible in any

of them, but I now realize that, except the château, there is not one of them which does not carry my imagination on to some piece of water which lies beyond, to some rippling trout stream, wind-ruffled tarn, reed-lined broad, or sluggish river where the chub lie out in the sun.

It comes to this, that of thirty-one pictures there is only one which is not in some sense to me a fishing picture. And at the same time there are only two which have any definite fishing intention, sea-scapes which show fishing boats ashore or afloat and fishermen with nets and catch. I possess a few "fishing pictures," strictly so to be called, but, as I am fortunate enough to be married, they are hung elsewhere and not in this particular room.

This, as I have said, is a confession, so I must hasten to disclaim any natural clearness of vision in this matter. It was not till I read the page-proofs of your book that I began to think about it, and after a course of thinking came to realize how true is that excellent saying of yours : "To know when to leave out the act of fishing is among the many problems which artist-anglers study." It really puts the whole thing in a nutshell. The "act of angling" is by no means an essential in an "angling picture." And, as I have also learnt, it is not necessary even to show the place where that act will be performed. The primrose path beside the spinney leads to that place. Why, even Waterloo Station on a fresh May morning . . . but perhaps repentance sometimes leads the convert too far !

One of the best-remembered thrills in my fishing life was my first sight of the trophy on which you touch—J. W. M. Turner's fishing-rod. The thought of it, and the memory of that great master's love of fishing, bring me to the technical aspect of your book. You have, besides giving me that new insight into art's relation in general to the sport, surprised me very greatly by the wealth of evidence which you have collected as to the relation in particular. I ought, I suppose, to have known—perhaps, dimly, I *did* have an inkling—that the brush and the pencil have busied themselves a good deal with various aspects of fishery ; as a student of fishing books I have naturally come across and studied many illustrations in the different periods.

But I had no idea what a great number of painters and draughtsmen could be definitely claimed by the angling fraternity as sealed of its own tribe, either because they actually fished or because they dealt with the sport with sympathy

and understanding, recording fact as well as atmosphere. The gallery which you have filled so convincingly is an edifice of unexpected dimensions. And you make me feel that it is very much more than a mere annexe to the fisherman's library. It has its own separate and independent importance in regard to the evolution of fishing. And our previous neglect of it merits all the harsh things which you might, but kindly do not, say.

As for what you do say—this is not a review, or an appreciation, or an introduction, or any ambitious thing of the kind. It is merely a statement of the effect of your book on a reader who “thought he knew something about it!” The shock has been considerable, but it is the sort of shock which is uncommonly good for one, and I should like to conclude this letter with a hearty “Thank you very much.”

H. T. SHERINGHAM.





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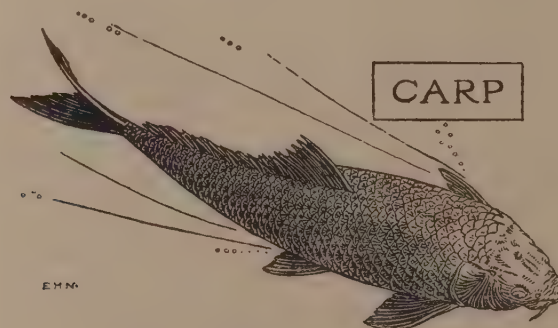
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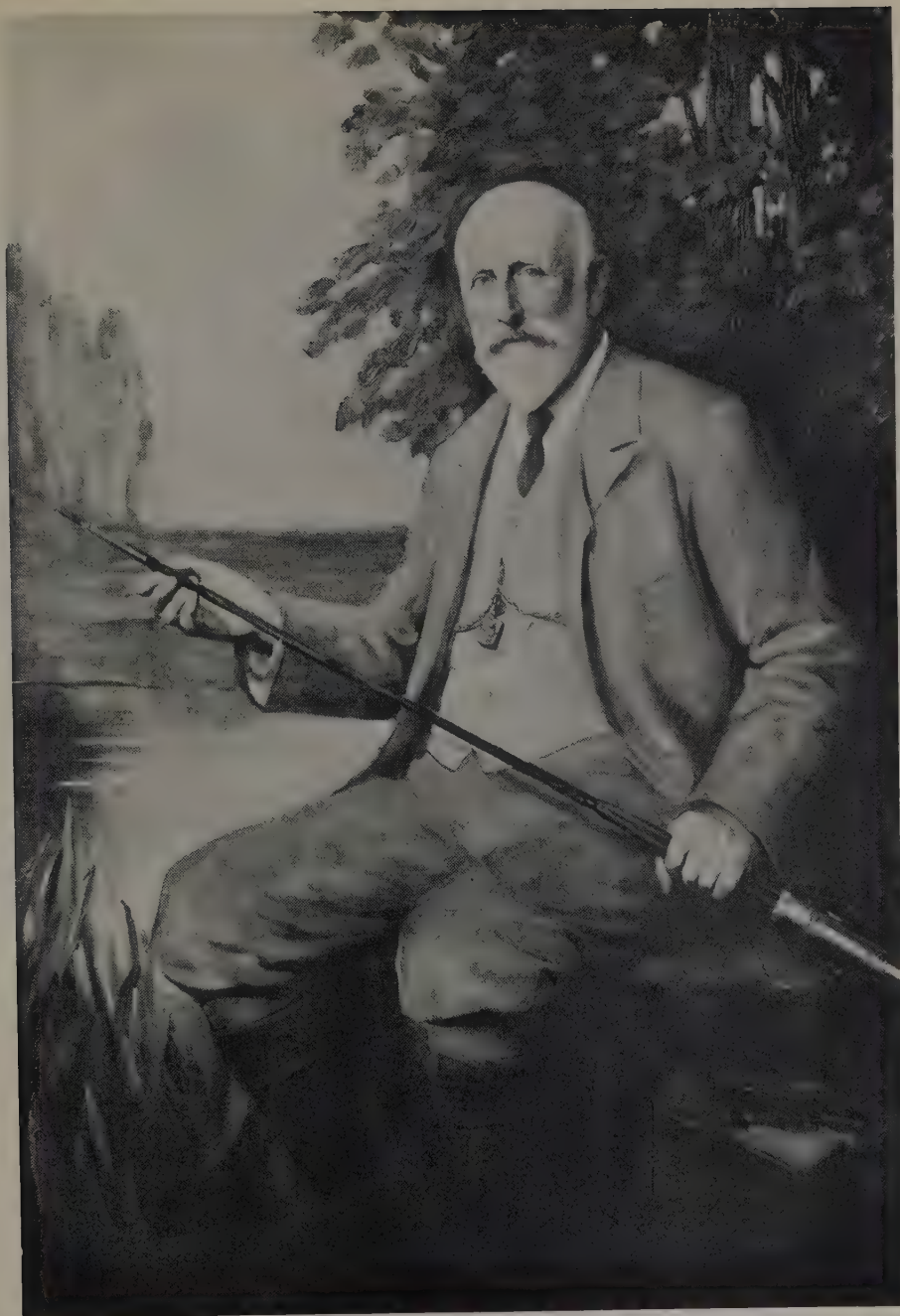
ANGLING IN BRITISH ART

*"I care not, I, to fish in seas—
Fresh rivers most my mind do please,
Whose sweet calm course I contemplate,
And seek in life to imitate. . . ."*



ILLUSTRATION TO WALTON'S "ANGLER'S SONG."

Drawn for Sir Frederick Macmillan by the late HUGH THOMSON.



PORTRAIT OF FREDERIC M. HALFORD, 1844-1914, Famous Authority on Dry Fly Fishing. Painted by J. H. AMSCHWITZ (1907). From a Photograph lent by M. H. Spielmann, Esq.

PREPARATORY

HOW TO BEGIN AND HOW TO END

I

IF every man in his time plays many parts, his acts being seven ages, he can find only one sport, varied angling, which is fit for him to practise from first childhood on into second childishness, when he may still have strength enough to hold a rod while waiting for a bite. Six of the seven ages are represented in angling pictures, and prints, and drawings; and the variable span of human life having thus, in art, its own complete angler, let us remember that Walton himself lived through the seven ages in a very fine span of ninety years, and that he was sixty when the first copies of his ever-youthful masterpiece were sold at eighteenpence, in the Mayfly season of 1653.

Freshwater fishing, again, if we look at it from a standpoint of decorative art, has one notable advantage over hunting and over racing: its charm in pictures is more likely than theirs to be homely in quiet family rooms, for it is never a spectacular charm, and its most strenuous movements have not the stress of such rapid action as that of horses and hounds. In other words, there is no reason for a picture of angling to be dominantly a sporting picture. Its authors can attain "art *plus* sport" without encountering those complicated difficulties which have turned a great many hunting and racing pieces into "sport *plus* a little art."

With these primary things before our minds, let me review my subject in its relations to the great adventurers called "a good start" and "a right ending." There are difficult questions of art-editing to be considered, and other difficult questions of literary handling; for a book on research in the history of art is really a double book, and, like matrimony, it is troubled by what Balzac calls *les petites misères de la vie conjugale*.

II

Through more than four centuries, age after age, a few British artists have called up into pictorial presence varying aspects of angling, the first pioneers

being rough and quaint draughtsmen. I speak of mundane angling, angling as a sport or pastime, omitting all reference to Scriptural fishing symbols and to miraculous draughts of fishes. Prints and pictures of the sport accumulated slowly, and I think that Walton himself never wanted to see them produced numerously, for he kept away from his great junior, Francis Barlow, who would have worked as admirably with him as with *Æsop's Fables*.

Whenever I look at the wonderful amount of design and etching that Barlow put into his editions of *Æsop*, I say to myself: "All this original thought and life ought to have been active in another and a different way, collaborating with Izaak Walton's genius! Then the value of *The Compleat Angler* would have been doubled."

Still, though Walton did very little for angling in art, Barlow did much on his own free account; and a hundred years after his death there were prints enough, and pictures also, no doubt, scattered here and there, to merit careful study in a book of research, liberally illustrated. But no such book appeared. Angling writers had been slow, age after age. Thus, in 1811, when one of the best known lists of angling works was published by G. W. H. Ellis, the number of printed books and treatises was no more than eighty, though three hundred and fifteen years had gone by since Wynkyn de Worde had brought out the first one in the Second Edition of *The Boke of St. Albans*.

After 1811 anglers were very different, becoming so alert and so wideawake as writers and as book-buyers, that in 1883, when a new version of the *Bibliotheca Piscatoria* was completed by Westwood and Satchell, no fewer than 3158 editions of 2148 different works were catalogued, with notes. This means that in seventy-one years, from 1811 to 1882, 2068 first editions of original new works on freshwater fishing had been written and brought out. And since 1883, just forty years ago, there has been no end of writing in English by anglers on the varieties of their sport.

Yet you will search in vain for a book on my subject, Angling and British Artists, as they appear together in pictures, and prints, and drawings. Good as this wide subject has been for a full century, fly-fishers and bottom-fishers have left it uncared for, preferring to continue their custom of writing about other and familiar phases of angling. Have they believed that the graphic and pictorial arts, since 1496, have had only one good thing to do for their sport, namely, to adorn books on fishing with prints and plates?

If so, I remain perplexed, as even this one good thing has been held cheap very often by writers on freshwater fishing, as by the chatty editors of Walton's masterpiece who have kept the new generations in the dark about



HELL'S HOLE ON THE RIVER TAY. A noted Salmon
Haunt, near Stanley, and close by Stobhall, where John Bright
fished. From a Proof Etching by D. Y. CAMERON, R.A.

Walton's illustrators, when compiling bibliographies of *The Compleat Angler*. Even Mr. R. B. Marston, to whom we all owe many a debt of gratitude, has been unkind to draughtsmen and painters. In 1915 he edited an edition of *The Compleat Angler* for the Oxford University Press, and in all respects but one a copy of it is enjoyable. The introduction is brief and charming, there are twenty half-tone illustrations, the printing is good, the binding quiet and pleasant, and the book is thin enough in bulk to be put in one's pocket as a companion. But, unluckily, the list of editions from 1653 to 1915 is not what a bibliography should be, coldly complete, like a railway guide, its compiler having omitted every one of the artist-illustrators, while printing the name of every editor, including his own name, which appears three times. And these remarks apply also to Le Gallienne's edition of *The Compleat Angler*, which is beautifully decorated by Edmund H. New, a master of pen-drawing. Le Gallienne prints his own name several times among the editors, like Mr. R. B. Marston, while forgetting that the act and art of illustrating Walton's pastoral have been employed for one purpose only—to make the book's appeal more *visibly* attractive, and therefore more popular. Clearly, then, art and artists are affronted when a bibliographer declines to find a place for them in a long list of editions. There is an edition, remember, containing original etchings both by D. Y. Cameron and the late William Strang. What more does an editor need?

And this matter is united to another. Fly-fishers and bottom-fishers have never founded a school of their own among sporting artists, in emulation of those other schools which, since the days of Francis Barlow (*i.e.* the seventeenth century), have been actively concerned with hunting, and racing, and shooting. Artists have been influenced by angling mainly because they have liked to use it in their work from time to time; and their separation from well-to-do angler-patrons has been shown, age after age, in a good many circumstances. For instance, great English country houses have not inherited any collections of fishing prints and pictures; so my subject has no Badminton of its own, no Welbeck Abbey, and no Althorp Park. The few collections are modern, like Mr. Arthur N. Gilbey's in England, and the late Daniel B. Fearing's in the U.S.A.

Whenever painters have been attracted by freshwater fishing, as a good many were in the James Pollard period, their principal support has come from outside the angling clubs; and pretty soon their pictures have been forgotten, like those of William Jones, or their prints in little editions have perished through neglect into rarity, like James Pollard's; then their merit in a few

well-preserved examples has begun to rise higher and higher in the markets. Or take the case of Francis Barlow. He did much more for angling than for racing, yet his one racing print founded a school in the art-patronage of the Turf, while his angling prints and pictures, though emulated by several early painters, like Smith of Derby, produced a slump, not a school. So inhospitable were anglers during that period of seventy-four years in which Walton's masterpiece remained out of print (1676-1750), awaiting the good word of Dr. Johnson, who was charmed by the pastoral beauty of *The Compleat Angler*.¹

And this lukewarm attitude towards pictorial art is the more remarkable because many books by anglers have some artistic qualities which appear only now and then in other sporting writers: frequent poetic qualities, and rich touches of good colour, united to a fondness for variety in well-chosen landscapes. All this we do not find in Peter Beckford, in Colonel Thornton, or, again, in "The Druid."

III

I have related some preliminary facts, and most of them have kept us at close quarters with a problem that concerns the tastes of anglers. How is this problem to be explained? For what reasons have anglers kept away from that steady patronage of art which has been active among other sportsmen through more than three centuries?

Let me offer as *obiter dicta* for quiet debate a set of allied reasons which I have ventured to choose after long inquiry and research.

1. Generally, the bent of anglers has run in the direction of words, words, words, as talkers, and readers, and writers.

2. Other men devoted to books, and notably playwrights and novelists, have never won much fame by collecting prints and pictures, though some have had a talent for drawing, as Thackeray had, and as Rudyard Kipling has.

¹ Andrew Lang says of this matter, in his and E. J. Sullivan's edition of *The Compleat Angler* (Dent, 1896), that times altered after 1676: "Walton is really an Elizabethan; he has the quaint freshness, the apparently artless music of language of the great age. He is a friend of 'country contents'; no lover of the town, no keen student of urban ways and mundane men. A new taste, modelled on that of the wits of Louis XIV, had come in: we are in the period of Dryden, and approaching that of Pope. There was no new edition of Walton till Moses Browne (by Johnson's desire) published him, with 'improvements,' in 1750. Then came Hawkins's edition of 1760. . . ."

Further, Mr. R. B. Marston has seen a copy of Moses Browne's edition of Walton's *Angler*, a presentation copy from Dr. Johnson to an officer of the name of Astle, in which Johnson had written, "A mighty pretty book, a mighty pretty book." As Johnson was not a fisherman, this praise cannot refer to the technical teaching.



A SALMON STREAM. From the Oil Painting by JAMES DOCHARTY, A.R.S.A. (1829-1878), Glasgow Gallery. This picture shows the Lochy Water, with Ben Nevis in the background. 2ft. 11in. x 3ft. 11in.

3. To this argument I add a thing important enough to be called a national pleasure, namely, the love of pedigree animals which racing men and other horsemen have inherited from age to age, and also have improved greatly since Peter Beckford, in his *Thoughts on Hunting*, ran counter to the old kennel habit of flogging hounds unreasonably. Is it this love of sporting animals, all carefully bred and specially trained, that has endowed its own sportsmen with a widening outlook upon life and upon art? If fly-fishers needed a special breed of spaniel to do the work now done by net and gaff: if this were a fact in their sport, and not an idea fit for *Alice in Wonderland*, would they begin to see that their craft needs as much encouragement from them in the fine arts as hunting and racing have received in these arts from their own sportsmen? ¹

4. Remember, in this connection, the influence animal portraiture has had on sporting prints and pictures. Omit this portraiture from the best prints and pictures, and perhaps more than one half of the racing and hunting subjects will be cancelled, together with many phases of history: fashions in dress, for instance, and changes in farming habits, and the gradual improvement of hounds and horses. Further, the love of animals being almost universal, many painters have felt the need of it in angling pictures, and have put in a friendly dog. Seymour Haden did so in one of his etched angling prints, like Fred Walker, A.R.A., in "The Peaceful Thames," a charming idyll of children fishing; there is also Ansdell's canvas of "Landing a Salmon," and Sir George Harvey's Fishing Party on Loch Lee.

5. Very often there is a loneliness in angling that is generally absent from other open-air sports; so I note that a good many old prints and pictures look almost crowded with anglers, as though their producers remembered that most people liked to see plenty of company in sporting subjects. Take Barlow's print of seventeenth century rod-fishing, or the younger Wolstenholme's picture of angling in a woodland river; these are typical examples, and they have been criticized by some experts of to-day, though the Barlow is a little masterpiece, a sort of tapestry of angling, ingenuous in feeling, and very ingenious in design. It is an epitome of rod-fishing, during Walton's later years, and invaluable as evidence at first-hand. Though a fishing competition along a span of river much too narrow, and therefore at

¹ After writing this paragraph I found at the Piscatorial Society, London, in a large album, a print by Samuel Howitt (1750-1822) called, "The Canine Landing Net"! It represents a spaniel coming from some tallish reeds with a fish in his mouth; and the fish is attached to a hook and line. Izaak Walton speaks of a gentleman in Leicestershire, Mr. Nich. Seagrave, who made a young otter tame, and taught her to catch fish.

fault from a technical standpoint, it is happy and beautiful as a sporting decoration.

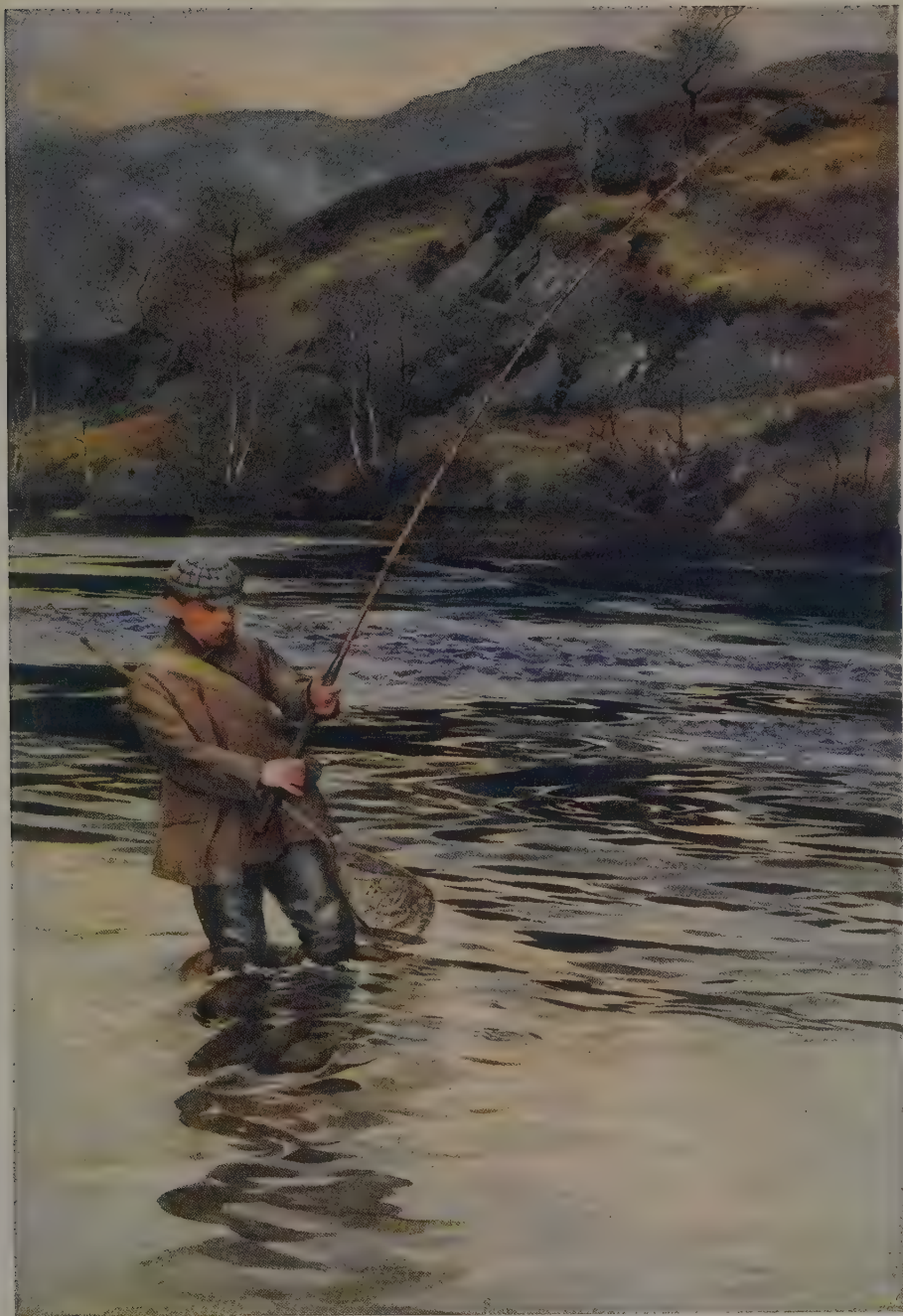
6. We move on to another notable thing, the passion which anglers have retained for the technique of their progressive craft, with its joys, troubles, customs, and autobiographies, written and spoken. A ruling passion cannot well be more dominantly strong than this one has been, and I cannot help thinking that it has done a great deal to prevent anglers from seeing their sportsmanship as it has been viewed by free artists, who, naturally, have valued self-expression as a need of their own craft. Remember that realism in prints and pictures is well-defined, even concrete, and therefore likely to offend the angler's technical precision. On these matters an old angler writes to me as follows :—

“ No doubt there are anglers who *do* love pictures as pictures, and who are not painter-anglers. I can summon before my mind those whom I have known well. Let me take myself as an example. Till I retired from the practice of fly-fishing, it was very difficult for me to look *objectively*—that is, without personal bias—at a picture of my favourite sport ; my criticisms of art were centred in myself. I was an egoist who desired that Art should live for fly-fishing. And I've noticed the same thing in my friends. That is to say, whenever I've put before them one of my angling prints or pictures, newly bought, their passion for the technique of fly-fishing has begun at once to talk, and very often it has raided a mood in art chosen by a painter whose well-defined aim and end should have been accepted within their own limits.

“ I make no complaint, you understand, because I find no fault ; I express no wonder, for I feel none at all. The great craft of fly-fishing has a wonderful fascination, by which its really ardent devotees are shut up in a sect. If a painter-angler chooses a motif from the sport, and paints a jolly good angling picture, he's almost certain to be 'crabbed' by anglers who are not painters. Perhaps he has put in a spot too many on a fish, for instance ; this, let me say, is regarded as a sin unpardonable by one famous writer on angling. Another writer almost as famous hates the colour blue, and curses any painter who sees the blue in water. Yes, and he dresses a blue-winged olive with slatey wings !

“ These are facts : and I rejoice to add that although these writers have no feeling for paint and painters, they are big fine fellows in their own delightful craft. As I regard angling as a sectarian in sport, like golf, I cannot yet believe that its non-artist followers will ever form a school of angling painters. In all probability, so far as I can see, paintings of the sport will continue to be private adventures undertaken by artists for their own enjoyment . . .”

In any case, there must be reasons for the very small amount of support



PORTRAIT OF ERNEST BRIGGS, R.I. (1866-1919). *From a Water-Colour by A. T. NOWELL, in the Collection of Mrs. Briggs.*

which has been given by anglers to the encouragement of sporting art. Those which are offered here for consideration form a genial set.

IV

To an art-editor the technique of fly-fishing is troublesome, as well as attractive. What artists in their work have done with angling, not what they might have done if anglers had been patrons of art, is, of course, my subject. Yet several fly-fishers have hinted plainly that my research should be confined to one big thing only—the standpoint of fly-fishermen. Let us look at this matter more in detail, for it is instructive to do so.

My subject belongs to those artists who, from age to age, have made free use of freshwater fishing, and through them, of course, it belongs to every person who loves art and country life united to sport and to centuries of history. The rich technique of fly-fishing, with its own art and its literary history, is very important, obviously, but its value to painters is that of a varied inspiration, not that of an autocratic master, *unless* technical precision is the governing aim.

If a fly-fisher is a painter also, and if he produces a picture in which his own sport is introduced, he will choose one of two attitudes :

(a) The attitude of J. M. W. Turner, who thought of his composition, not of angling handicraft.

(b) Or he will say to himself : “ As a fisherman I must have everything as other fishermen will wish it to be. My anglers, however small, must be doing the proper thing in precisely the right way, even though this narrowing restraint may harm the freedom of my work as a picture.”

Myself, as art-editor, I accept both of these attitudes, and also the attitudes of painters who, so far as we know, did not practise angling, any more than they served an apprenticeship in farming before they painted ploughmen, sowers, reapers, and harvesters.

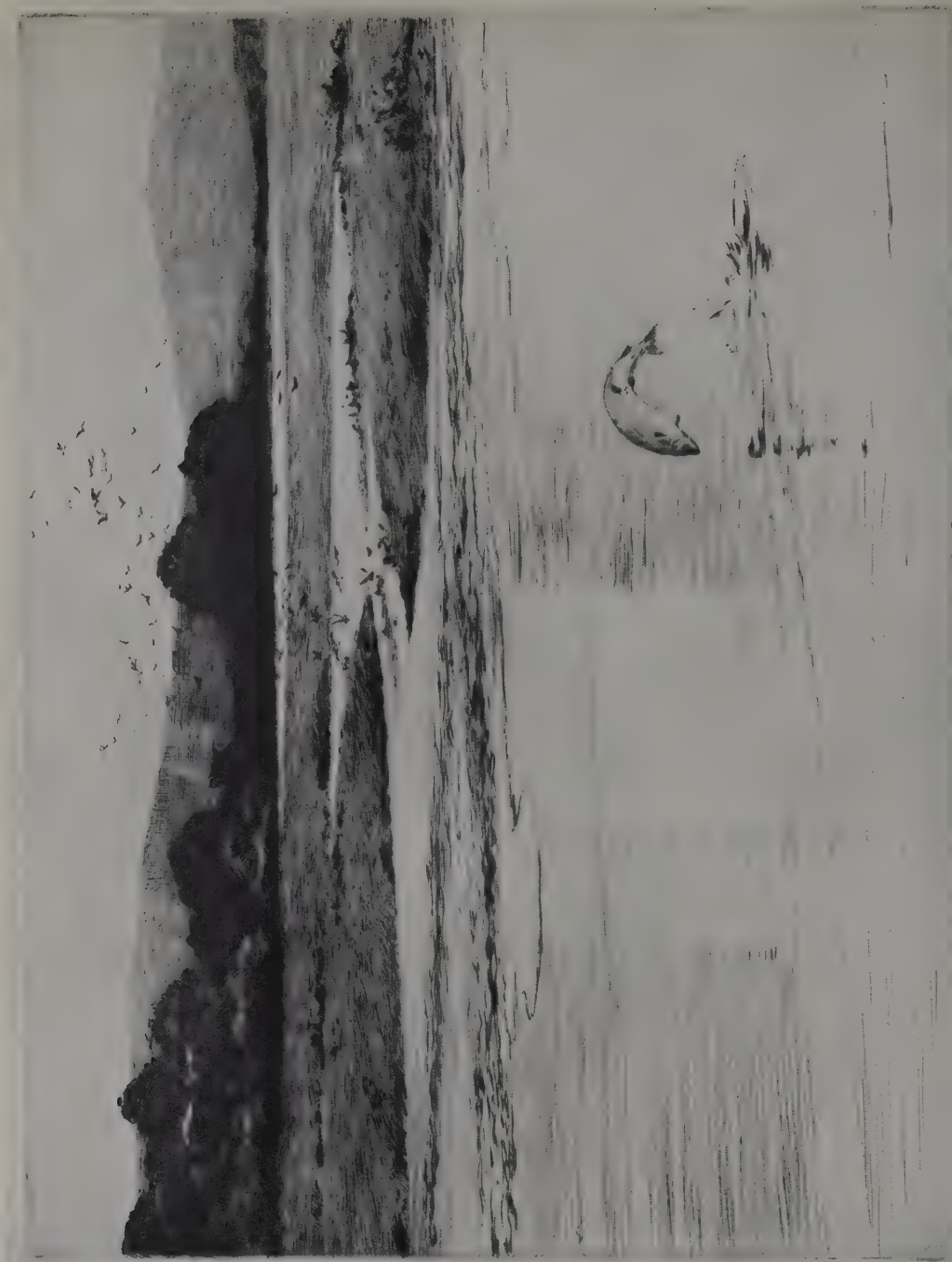
Still, there is a belief among fly-fishers that their craft cannot be painted well except by artists who are masters also of the rod. They forget several very important considerations. In the first place, few landscape painters have been important also as figure painters, and if a fly-fisher is placed in the foreground of a riverside, the picture needs good figure painting as well as a broadly-seen treatment of airy landscape : there is thus a union of two arts, and it cannot be achieved by a painter-angler whose training and practice fit him for landscape only or mainly. Thus Patrick Nasmyth, in his well-composed oil-colour named “ The Angler’s Nook,” put in only an incidental

fisher, a small, seated figure in a white smock and a black hat. Again, good figure painting depends on synthetical observation trained by long practice, and fly-fishers are not more difficult to observe correctly than other figures in a country scene. Any first-rate figure painter who is a landscapist also, like Brangwyn, could paint a first-rate angling picture if he desired to do so.

It is natural for specialists to overstate the value of their own technique to the practice of painting. But it is equally natural for their critics to ask a few questions. For instance, is it necessary for painters to practise surgery before they attempt to emulate Rembrandt's *Leçon d'Anatomie du professeur N. P. Tulp*? Is it wrong for them to study marine painting from ships and the sea, or should they begin by serving as mates in the merchant service? At a time when sailors used to complain that R. L. Stevenson's frank seamanship was often candidly wrong, an ardent angler, Andrew Lang, answered mockingly, "I care no more than I do for the year One!" And surely he was right. *Kidnapped* and *Treasure Island* had entered a most elusive harbour, a lasting popularity; lasting, for they continue to keep a great many more friends than *The Cruise of the Midge* and *Tom Cringle's Log*, whose seamanship sailors have always admired. Similarly we may be certain that correct angling technique alone will not create a masterpiece of painting, not even when it is necessary to the painter's aims.

It happens, too, that technical knowledge is extremely hard to apply artistically after it has been acquired at first hand by painters and writers. Take George Stubbs and his thorough study of equine anatomy. He dissected dead horses, and learnt by heart how the muscles and veins looked under the skins; but when he tried to employ his knowledge in pictures of living and active horses, Stubbs failed many times. Indeed, "The Druid" went so far as to tell his readers that Stubbs was ignorant of anatomy!¹ "The Druid" must have seen a sequence of Stubbs' failures, but failures of this sort remind us of the two varieties of knowledge used by artists: one gained by observation only, and the other by scientific research, by practising a craft, or by following a sport. It matters not how the knowledge is gained if painters or writers make works of art.

¹ To confirm this fact turn to *The Post and the Paddock*, edition of 1857, and on p. 139 you will read, sandwiched between some remarks on Ben Marshall, a few confident statements about Stubbs. For instance: "His chief failing was a lack of anatomical knowledge, and his horses in motion were stiff and unnatural to the last degree. He adopted the old style of making the hind pasterns bend inwards in the gallop, instead of outward, as they are now more correctly drawn." How ironic that Stubbs, the greatest authority on the anatomy of horses, should have been accused of "a lack of anatomical knowledge"!



A SPEY SALMON POOL. From the Drypoint

And let us remember also that many good fishing pictures have no anglers in them ; still-life studies of fish, for instance, and Horatio McCulloch's " Loch Maree " (1866), or Seymour Haden's fine etching of the well-known dry-fly stream, the Test. In fact, some prints and paintings are full of angling charm without any help from fly-fishers or bottom-fishers, while many illustrations of the great craft of casting have either no charm at all or a charm that is inferior. Casting, indeed, like the act of throwing a cricket ball from the boundary into the wicket-keeper's gloves, is really an unpaintable thing, as figure painters will admit. The movement of a wet line is very attractive, but its gleam, or shimmer, cannot be suggested in a picture ; and also a single movement, when stopped and fixed by art, needs very often the companionship of other such movements, as in hunting and racing pictures. Then combinations of line and form test a painter's trained gift as a designer. I have not yet seen a picture of casting with a fishing magic quite equal to that of Norman Wilkinson's dry-point etching called " A Spey Salmon Pool." In this work, where many contrasts of black and white and grey have the richness almost of velvety mezzotint, the only fishers are noisy gulls gliding in low flight over some ridged shallows, and near the foreground, very well placed, a fine, rapturous young salmon is leaping as a silvery curve from so calm a face of water that it is ruffled only by the splash made by the upward spring. This dry-point is a gladdening inspiration ; it liberates into free art (if we see and feel it as collaborators) many sympathetic memories of sport which may be too chatty when anglers write about them.

Yet a noted angler, in a published criticism of the " Spey Salmon Pool," writes with a sectarian bias, saying that this " beautiful and typical Speyside scene " represents " the point of view of the artist," as though an artist should borrow points of view ; and that the leaping salmon is " obviously not a taking fish." " The light, moreover, to those who set store thereby, though beautiful, is not encouraging to seekers after sport. We imagine to ourselves a long, blank, laborious morning with a clean Scottish air filling our lungs, and urging us to further endeavour." ¹

Now these quotations are autobiographical ; their author has chosen certain things from his recollections of sport, and they happen to be things which Norman Wilkinson, who is a keen fly-fisher, tried to cut off from his chosen purpose ; tried also with success, if we, as print-lovers, free our minds of irrelevancies. The day being a bad one for sport, Norman Wilkinson

¹ As I am writing about principles, not about critics, I think it better to leave unnamed the publication from which I quote.

omitted a fly-fisher from his composition, and enjoyed himself as a free artist while the salmon leaped through its holiday. If we say that the "leaping fish, well drawn," does "not stir much hope in the heart of the angler," or that the light, 'though beautiful, is not encouraging to seekers after sport," we allow irrelevancies in our own minds to circulate to other minds, harming what an artist has done finely for our enjoyment. Whether the harm is done wittingly or unwittingly, we recall to many persons what Thackeray used to say about those reviewers who found fault with a book for what it did not give, as thus, to take Thackeray's examples :

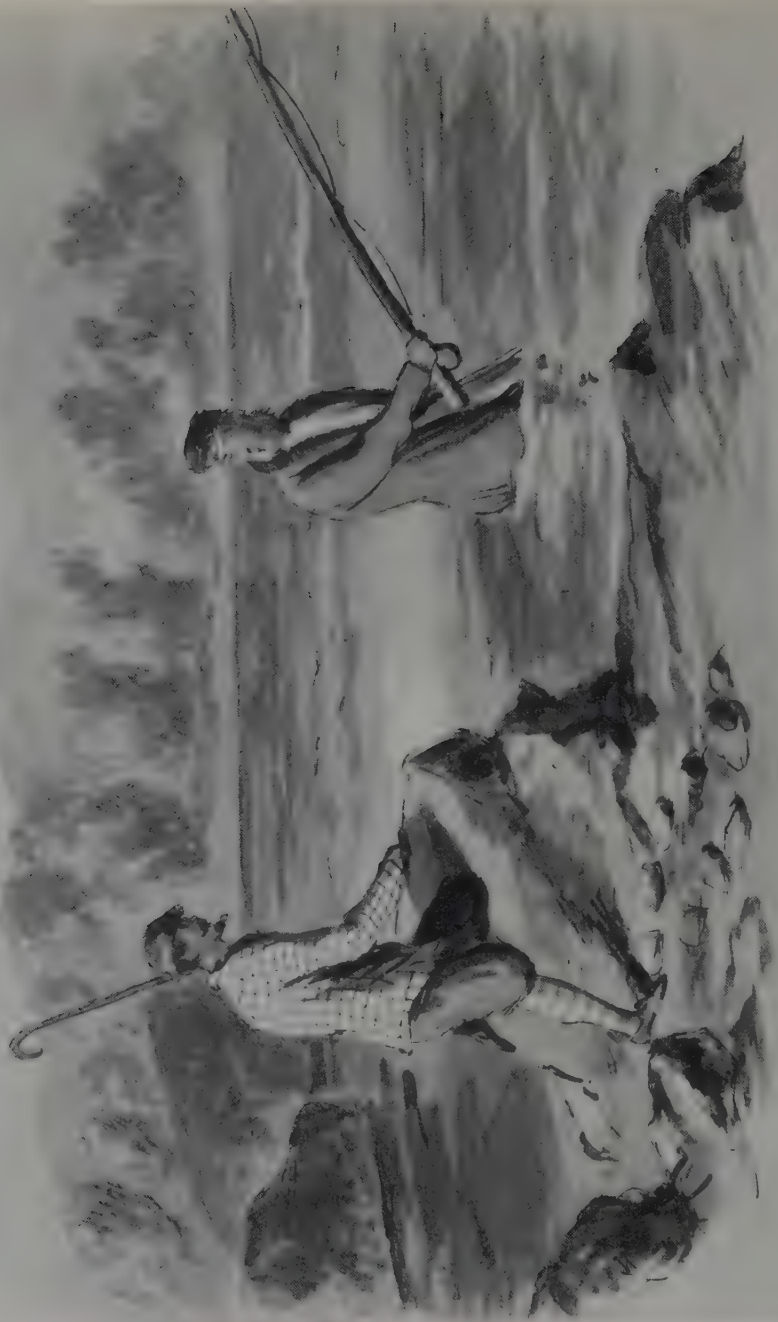
"Lady Smigsmag's novel is amusing, but lamentably deficient in geological information."

"Mr. Lever's novels are trashy and worthless, for his facts are not borne out by any authority, and he gives no information about the political state of Ireland. Oh! our country, our green and beloved, our beautiful and oppressed!"

True criticism, in other words, is just interpretation : it collaborates with artists loyally ; and for this reason we must clear our minds of fixed ideas when we study what artists have done with freshwater fishing. Even illustrations which invite criticism, like Newton Fielding's, are often valuable ; sometimes we learn from them what our forefathers bought, and sometimes, like the rare Newton Fielding's in colour, they are united to a good phase of aquatinting, or to some other cleverly used process of reproduction. There is but little that is valueless if students of history clear their minds of whims and prejudices. The costumes worn by anglers at different periods, and the rods they handle, are always entertaining, no matter what the prints or pictures may be from other standpoints.

Yet one specialist, to whom I wrote, wanted to confine my subject in a bywater where only three fishermen were allowed to ply their craft ; three only, and always the same trio : Richard Ansdell, R.A., who died in 1885, Ernest E. Briggs, R.I., who died in 1913, and P. Chenevix Trench, an Irish amateur, who illustrated *The Sportsman in Ireland*, published in 1897 by Edward Arnold. The expert spoke of them as the only draughtsmen known to him who combined technical knowledge of angling with power to delineate the craft satisfactorily. Note what happens when a specialist limits his own view to technical knowledge of angling with the power of delineating the craft satisfactorily.

First of all he limits himself to illustrative work only, and to his own unguided opinion of what it should be as art. But we have a right to ask :



"I shall see how you get on your fishing. The holes are whoopers hereabouts!"

Is he a trained judge, an artist, as well as a good angler? Next, he implies that his chosen draughtsmen are illustrators merely, and this may be unfair to their merits. It *is* unfair in the case of Briggs, for instance, as we shall see. And why should an expert be so impolite as to turn his back upon J. S. Sargent, Charles Furse, G. H. Boughton, Sir George Harvey, Charles Keene, and some other moderns? When I wrote to angling artists, asking for their kind help, I received very different advice, naturally, for art must rise above the merely illustrative if it is to be abundantly useful to sport and to country life. One famous painter said: "You know Charles Keene made some inimitable drawings of Scottish angling subjects, and, of course, Sargent's great tumble of water must be given."

Or we may take one of those free and charming water-colours by David Cox, wherein two or three country children show a triumph of hope over experience by watching for a movement of their floats in one of those ponds where bites come from puffs of wind ruffling the water. Does anyone believe that these pictures, studies of Nature and of happy childhood, are not much nearer to the heart of angling than a technical illustration?

Good photographs would show the handling of rod and line more correctly than drawings, and would be as helpful as illustrations of technique, as good photographs are to students of historic architecture. Viewed in this way, freshwater fishing is a delightful subject for a popular film. How excited townsfolk would be if a film showed them what prolific sport is like at Grimersta in the famous Kelt Pool! By my side is a rough sketch of a young angler and his ghillie at work in this pool: a sketch by W. G. Burn Murdoch, made in perhaps half an hour. It is entitled "Another!" The ghillie is kneeling, with his landing-net ready, and a dozen trout lie around him on the wet bankside. His master is a boy in kilts, who stands on a slippery boulder with his back towards me, looking down at his active line. As though bored by too easy fishing, he holds his rod inexpertly, as C. B. Fry would hold his bat if he were playing tip-and-run with little boys and girls. Rain falls, blurring the landscape, and bathing a typical scene of Grimersta fishing with drenched discomfort.

Altogether, my subject is new in a book, unlike the technique of angling, which has a vast library all to itself. We are going to see how angling has been used in portraiture, in landscape painting, in conversation groups (as they used to be called), in idealism, in charming pictures of children fishing, in some varied book illustrations, also in still life, in humour and caricature, and in print collecting.

As angling, viewed in its relation to Nature out of doors, is unassertive, it is fit to be used more often than hunting and shooting as an element of quiet composition, by means of which painters can put symbols of peace into rugged landscape, and suggestions of activity into days completely mild and serene. Incidental anglers are not frequent enough in British art, but whenever they are found in good period pictures, they are sportsmen to be loved, helping us to breathe the many original atmospheres which men of genius have stored up in their landscape paintings and water-colours.

Portraitists also have failed to use angling enough in their independent work, regardless of what anglers might say. The earliest angling picture of note is a portrait mentioned by Walton, the portrait of Dr. Nowel, at Brasenose College, Oxford ; and there is a sequence of occasional angling portraits that unites Dr. Nowel to excellent work done in recent years. But all students of the present subject, and notably Mr. A. N. Gilbey, to whom I am greatly indebted, will admit that portrait painters, like landscapists, have not angled themselves often enough into great and original successes. There is only one known angling portrait by Raeburn, for instance, though Raeburn was a good trout fisher. And I can find nothing by Reynolds, and nothing by Gainsborough, not even a chalk sketch, though he fished from time to time.

Why is it that artists, working independently, have not made more frequent use of freshwater fishing? A Scottish painter, William Walls, R.S.A., himself a fly-fisher, says, in answer to this question :

“ I know of many Scottish painters who are anglers, but I don't know of any who have painted angling pictures except myself. They are not easy to paint, as they must *be done in a few hours at most*.

“ Since getting your letter I have thought a good deal over the matter, but get no farther forward. The only other Scottish painter of angling pictures I can think of is William Geddes, father of Ewan Geddes, R.S.W. He died a good many years ago. It is a long time since I have seen any of his pictures, but he made a special study of such subjects, and won a great reputation with anglers anyhow.”

A cold bath for me as researcher ; and though I tried hard to get out of it by writing open letters to thirty newspapers in Scotland, pleading for Scottish angling pictures by Giles, Harvey, Sam Bough, Fraser, and others, I received a disappointing number of useful answers. Still, Mr. William



ANGLERS FISHING FOR PIKE AND PERCH.
From an Oil Painting by THE YOUNGER WOLSTEN-
HOLME (1798-1883). *The Arthur M. Gilbey Collection.*

Walls sent me a restorative, the "Angler's Prayer," which had been given to him by Mr. Jack the publisher, who came upon it in an old book :

" Lord, suffer me to catch a fish—
So large that even I,
When talking of it afterwards,
May have no *need* to lie."

As for Mr. Walls' remark about angling pictures being hard to paint because they need sure and rapid handling, it may be accepted as one reason for the rarity of such paintings ; and the next reason, suggested by the history of art, is that many landscapists have been too shaky in their figurework to be attracted by anglers, however skilled themselves in freshwater fishing. A third reason comes from Mr. Norman Wilkinson, who has created a desirable series of angling dry-points and water-colours. Every spring he takes a fly-fishing holiday in Scotland, after convincing himself that his only aim is thrift artistic, new motifs for pictures being necessary. So his rod and line compete along riversides against his brush and palette, and the first leaping fish wins many victories for sport. At once the angler's prayer emotion begins to act, and but for that frequent sulkiness which overcomes fish, and fishermen afterwards, not enough sketches would be done from Nature. Even Ernest Briggs, in his book on *Angling and Art in Scotland*, by writing as a jolly holiday-maker only, shows that angling in paint has a frequent opponent in the practice of fly-fishing.

Mr. A. N. Gilbey writes to-me on this point, and says :

" Among the eminent ones who did not contribute any work on angling (so far as I know) was my old friend Sir William Orchardson, R.A., who used to fish with me for a week every year on the Tweed, about thirty-five years ago, and with whom I used to fish in the Kennet in the early nineties. In the way of angling he cared for nothing but fly-fishing, and although he was not an expert, having taken to it somewhat late in life, he was an enthusiast devoted to the gentle craft."

It seems likely that one opponent to angling in art is to be found in that mood of sportsmanship which has regarded the rod and line as free from danger, and therefore inferior to hunting.

This mood is downright, for example, in Peter Beckford, who is to fox-hunting what Izaak Walton is to angling. In Letter XVII Beckford says :

" What are other sports, compared with this [*i.e.* fox-hunting], which is full of enthusiasm ! Fishing is, in my opinion, a dull diversion ; shooting,

though it admit of a companion, will not allow of many : both, therefore, may be considered as selfish and solitary amusements, compared with hunting ; to which as many as please are welcome : the one might teach patience to a philosopher ; and the other, though it occasion great fatigue to the body, seldom affords much occupation to the mind ; whereas fox-hunting is a kind of warfare ; its uncertainties, its fatigues, its difficulties, and its dangers, rendering it interesting above all other diversions. . . .”

Between about 1800 and about 1860, angling was too frequently a stock joke in graphic humour and banter, sometimes also in excessive caricature ; and many persons of to-day get self-enjoyment as wits by laughing at fresh-water fishing. Last year, for instance, an amateur crack at steeple-chasing said to a friend : “ I’m beginning to find pluck in anglers. An uncle of mine, aged sixty, angling in a Scotch river with the water to his thighs, caught a bad chill, and died in three days. By Jove ! There’s danger in this sport after all. And I happened to be my uncle’s heir.” There are overdone moods like this one in some of Robert Seymour’s comic sketches of angling.

But a marked change has certainly occurred since about 1860. Angling prints of the James Pollard period have risen higher and higher in market value ; new illustrated editions of Walton’s *Compleat Angler* have received varied and loving care, much better as art, usually, than the devotion to be found in earlier editing ; and again, enough angling pictures have been painted to start a flourishing school if a proper attitude towards this happy sport be present among writers, painters, etchers, sculptors, dealers in works of art, and private art-patrons. The useful and necessary thing is that less attention should be given by angling experts to literary and technical aspects of their craft, and much more attention to the many aspects that should appeal to painters, and etchers, and sculptors. Prize competitions offered to artists by great periodicals, such as *The Field* and *Country Life*, would be invaluable as a stimulus, and also as a collector of designs for a series of new angling prints.

V

We have considered some preliminary things that belong to the preparation of one portion of a book on art, namely, the illustrations, with their variety of appeal ; and now let me note the technical stages through which this one portion moves gradually, troubled by hitches and scrapes. There is nothing simple and easy in How to Begin and How to End.



TROUT AND EELS ON A BANKSIDE.
Painted in 1915 by WILLIAM WALLS, R.S.A.

A picture having been found and chosen, kind permission to reproduce it is sought from its owner, then, if possible, it is either borrowed to be reproduced in colour, or photographed carefully, often under difficult conditions. Now and then several trained men have to be hired before the picture can be removed from its wall; and sometimes the picture is so dusty that its oil paint has to be washed and varnished. The photographing is rarely "a soft job." On grey days, when the light is troublesome, two negatives are "taken," in the hope that one of them will be better than the other. The next stage begins with the blockmakers, continues through proofs and revises, into the actual printing, and thence through the processes of binding and publication.

An author and his collaborating publishers are not at ease till all of this work, work full of risks, is finished, under conditions which they cannot pick and choose with untrammelled freedom. If the printing happens to be as good as the blockmaker's passed proofs, one may perhaps feel, for a few minutes, as happy as bacteriologists do when they discover a new microbe, and have visions of unemployed undertakers. As a rule, reaction after long overstrain soon begins, and one sinks full fathoms five into gloomy self-censure, which remains active till another book is begun.

Is it not clear that this complex labour is really a sort of orchestra of diligent collaboration? The kind owner who allows his picture to be reproduced, not without some disturbance to his household, collaborates with the art-editing and the publishing; so do the photographer and the blockmaker; then the last anxieties of collaborating commence to be active, for printers and binders may be unlucky, as all craftsman are from time to time.

VI

Some other very difficult matters are active always around the art-editing; for conflicts of tastes and of schools demand incessant care when a book covers a great deal of changeful history. The main reasons are three:

1. Differences of attitude towards painting separate a great many painters from the editorial needs of a book in which centuries of efforts are reviewed.
2. Through a century and more, unceasing strife has divided artists into a couple of schools; hence it is necessary for an editor and his readers to see what this strife means to them.
3. If possible, present-day tastes and prejudices should be reconciled with the long evolution of earlier prejudices and tastes.

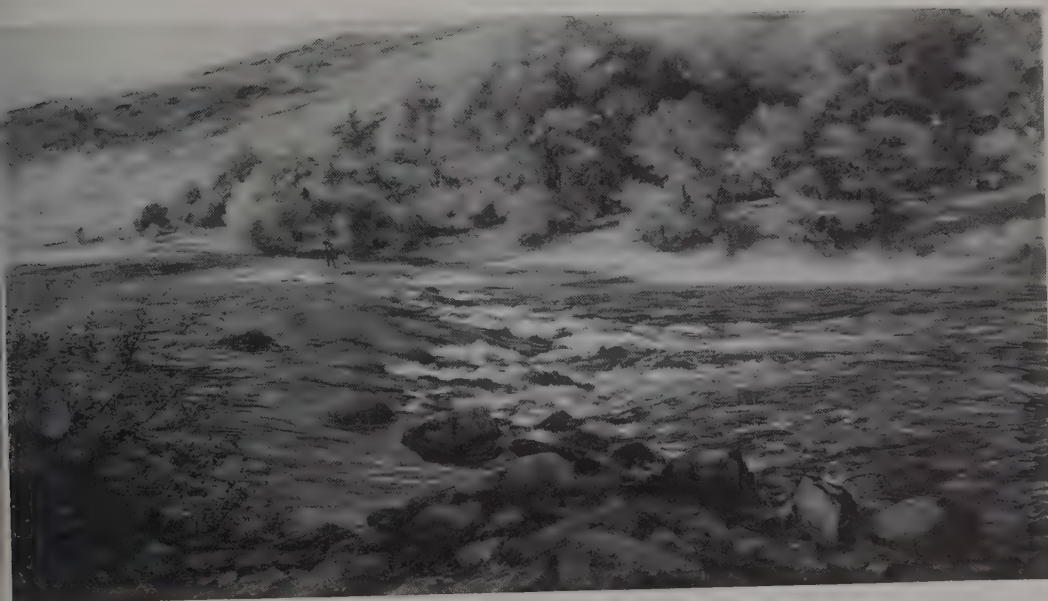
These things being very important, let us consider them closely.

(a) Contentions arise between craftsmen of different kinds because their needs are different, like their customs. Many painters do not perceive that art is a collaboration between art-workers and everybody who is invited to encourage what they produce. When this collaboration is quite easy books and pictures are "good-sellers," or "best-sellers"; but in a great many cases it has many difficulties. Then there is but little accord between the appeals made by artists and the minds and habitual tastes to which the appeals are made. Of course, persons of genius are free to shape their own lots, each in his own way; but for all that, the ruling fact of life is that we cannot live to please unless we please to live; that is to say, unless there is an interchange of sympathy between the work we do and certain current needs and tastes in the great purchasing public. Whether weak or strong, this bond of sympathy is a collaborating influence that unites us as craftsmen to the world outside our workshops; and let us remember also that it may become more and more far-spreading as a power friendly to art. Take Shakespeare as an example. When he began to write for the stage, he chose an appeal to the public more direct and more intimate than the printing-press would have put within his reach. So it became his duty as a playwright to hold the common crowd, and yet be free as a poet. Surely his compromising attitude towards the mob should be placed among the greatest of his achievements, since it has kept its authority on the stage not in English only, but also in translations for theatres abroad. This being true of the greatest of all Englishmen, why should many British artists try to win fame by cutting themselves off from ordinary people?

Some of them are researchers, and research often arrives tardily at good results; but there is also another reason. A painter needs only a handful of buyers, year after year, so he is not compelled, as writers of books are, to think of finished work in its relation to a large and enlarging public. Fifty pictures at £20 apiece, if sold in a year to fifty buyers (or less), earn a gross income of £1000. Deduct £250 for professional expenses, leaving a net income of £750. And now let us take an illustrated book on art, produced in a year and priced at a guinea net, with a royalty of 15 per cent. for its author—a royalty not often obtained since 1914. Well, if the author is to earn an income of £750 gross, some 5000 copies must be sold of his guinea book; thus his view of pictures, considered in their relation to daily life and the general public, cannot be that of a hermit, any more than a playwright's attitude to the drama can omit the theatre and its pit and gallery.



THE RIVER LLUGWY, AT BETTWS-Y-COED, 1904. *From an Oil Painting by B. W. LEADER, R.A. (1881-1923). 12½ in. x 17 in. By permission of Arthur Tooth & Son.*



A SALMON POOL ON THE WYE. *From an Oil Painting (48 in. x 72 in.) by H. W. B. DAVIS, R.A. (1833-1914). Exhibited in 1909 at the Royal Academy, London.*

(b) Allied with these considerations is that untiring strife which has gone on through more than a century between two varied schools of painters : the modernist school, whose innovators have always run the risk of being washed ashore, dead, by the changing tides of art's wayward fashions ; and the school of traditions, a conservative party which has reacted against " revolutionary " ideas and efforts. The strife continues, misemploying a vast amount of vitality which would be useful in production. We need a Court of Appeal in Art, where quarrels between schools would let off steam before a peacemaking judge and jury, and where critics once a year would be carefully examined by authors and artists.

In so far as art is concerned with sport, the newest " isms " are not yet active. Sporting painters belong to the traditional school, so they keep as near as they can to sportsmen, and to all townsmen who are attracted by sport and country life ; but most of them, happily, have responded to earlier phases of modernism. If there had been no daring innovators, traditional painting might have been stifled by custom and convention. Some of the newest modernism, I think, may become of service to sporting art.

One development may employ coloured glass or transparent enamel, with small electric lights in differently tinted bulbs put behind the pattern-work, to diversify uncommon harmonies of radiant colour. Some sporting compositions could be formalized in this way and used both as decorations for smoking-rooms, and as advertisements for the streets. Angling scenes would be suitable because movement in this sport is not often strenuously active ; it is often akin to the active repose of sculpture, and could be formalized—*abstracted* is the modernist word—into a new sort of decoration without seeming too anti-natural. Many sportsmen would accept it as they accept scenes of angling in ancient tapestry, or in tapestry-like compositions by Francis Barlow.

(c) Not that Barlow is at all popular, many sportsmen regarding his appeal as too far-distant from their minds ; and they say so unashamed, implying that it is he, not they, who should be blamed. When pictures belong to many centuries and to many different—and often opposed—styles, or ways of seeing and representing familiar things, familiar to us as twentieth-century persons, the business of art-editing is most difficult. As children of our own day we feel estranged from too much of the old or older workmanship representing types of society which have gone for ever ; but since it belongs to our subject we cannot afford to misjudge the past merely because it differed from our own times. Francis Barlow should be as near to us all

as John S. Sargent is, and the first little treatise on fishing with an angle, written quaintly with ingenuous pride, probably by Dame Barnes or Bernes, should be as chatty and charming to us as are the chapters on *Angling Adventures of an Artist*, written and illustrated by John Shirley-Fox, and published recently by John Murray.¹

As the oldest work is the least congenial to present-day habits of seeing and feeling, I am going to make use of an idea never before tested in a book, perhaps, and yet more reasonable than the old stock method of writing history. This old method drops us down as bewildered strangers into a far-off period, and compels us to travel from reign to reign towards our own time, slowly and uneasily, a plethora of dates enforced upon us as daily diet. No real country air is present in the congested facts which are supposed to sum up our forefathers' changing life in those centuries when England's mainstay was farming, and the golden fleece of her sheep-folds. This peculiar way of writing and of reading history has passed through the centuries almost unquestioned, conserved by custom. Myself, I began to think of it as a nonconformist when my book on *British Sporting Artists* was too far advanced for any important change to be made. One day a question came to me all of a sudden: "Surely Barlow ought to be at the end of this book, and the moderns at the beginning? Then the perspective and its long vista would conduct students from a familiar foreground, through gradually receding distances, to the farthest point of sight, the beginnings of British Sporting Art."

Certainly we look back upon the past, so it must be a custom of affectation to imagine that, by an effort of will-power, we can take our stand in a period far-off, and then move forward comfortably to our own time. When pictures are displayed in this tail-foremost arrangement, those which are most difficult to appreciate, being the most remote from our present-day ideas and tastes, are those which a student comes upon first, before he is prepared to be friendly with them. Let him live first with his contemporaries; then let him go back at ease through his own life and its pictures, on into his father's time, and into the next generations, feeling always that he is travelling period by period towards the beginnings of an art worth studying in all of its phases.

This idea I am going to test as carefully as is possible. It appeals to me strongly; not only is it new in a book, it is also natural and rational. As children we made use of it when we asked our parents to tell us about

¹ If this book had appeared earlier I should have reviewed it in Chapter I.

their own early days, then about their fathers and mothers, and their grandparents and great-grandparents. Similarly, in thinking of art I think first of its most assertive devotees, the present-day innovators ; next, by gradual stages, I go back to the year 1878, when, at the age of sixteen, I entered the Slade School of Art, and saw for the first time at exhibitions, the "isms" and "ites" of those days : Whistlerism, and Penny Whistlerism, competing with Classicists, Romantics, pre-Raphaelites, and Realists, Impressionists also, and Symbolists. Wonderful days ! Such hopes—as assertive as full sunlight, and clouded as easily !

From 1878 we can go pretty easily into, and through, the preceding period, and back into the eighteenth century, when angling pictures and prints, never so numerous as they ought to be, get scarcer and scarcer. The final period runs from Walton's time, which is also the time of Barlow, back to Dame Barnes or Bernes in the fifteenth century. As a whole it is a period of infrequent angling books frugally illustrated ; a period of path-findings, all notable as country history, with one masterpiece which has placed its author Izaak Walton among those of "the simple great ones gone" whose genius remains lovable imperishably. Indeed, if a writer on sport *can* be canonized, and enshrined as a patron saint, it is Walton, whom criticism has chosen for this honour, after thrusting aside a few notable protests.

VII

We pass on to the chapters and their composition. Here again the illustrations have incessant influence, an influence of three sorts : it interrupts literary composition incessantly, it makes writing on art different from other writing, and it is disturbing also to readers, whose collaboration with the whole book is invited by the book's production. These are things to be explained.

First, then, as regards the first influence. Long delays in procuring pictures, and in getting them photographed, interrupt literary composition, like proofing blocks and preparing them for the press ; and this hindering is troublesome because of the untiring research among books of many sorts, with unceasing verification, that chapters on history need. Anything that breaks in upon research increases the strain of prolonged concentration, often causing mistakes which writers somehow fail to see.

Next, writing on art differs from other writing ; it has problems of its own which cannot be solved by the handling of words. These problems have never been studied in a handbook, and few reviewers know them at all intimately. So they are worth summing up. Although art-criticism has been admitted into daily journalism (you see, dealers and publishers and exhibitions advertise in the Press), there is no kindredship between words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, pages, and those qualities of art which are profuse in subtle and varied combinations of coloured forms patterned with moving light and shade.

Now colour is to a painter's work what the timbre of his voice is to his daily talk, being all *his own colour*, just as the timbre of his voice belongs to this one voice alone : hence every writer on art who is really sensitive to the differing appeals of colour would rejoice if he could find words in which to make clear to his readers *how* one painter's colour differs from another's. Has this ever been done ? No, and it never will be done, just as words will never describe aptly the difference between two voices, or between the tones of two violins. Even in vivid, or primal, effects of colour, like several tints of brilliant red, you will find it impossible to convey in words correctly what the eye detects at a glance, the precise difference separating tint from tint. And all the capital qualities of good design, their subtleties, peculiar rhythms, and elusive diversities, belong for ever to the criticism of eyesight, not to the literary criticism of long-sought phrases. Analogies help somewhat, as when we speak of daffodil yellow ; but the best aid of all, after accepting the limits of one's craft, is right interpretation of a painter's dominant quality, his vigour or his gentleness, for instance, the writer's own style adapting itself to the painter's, and becoming like the painter's. Never trust a writer on art who draws a contrast between two markedly different painters without responding in his prose to the style of either of them. Similarly, be distrustful when superfine writing takes him away from sympathetic interpretation.

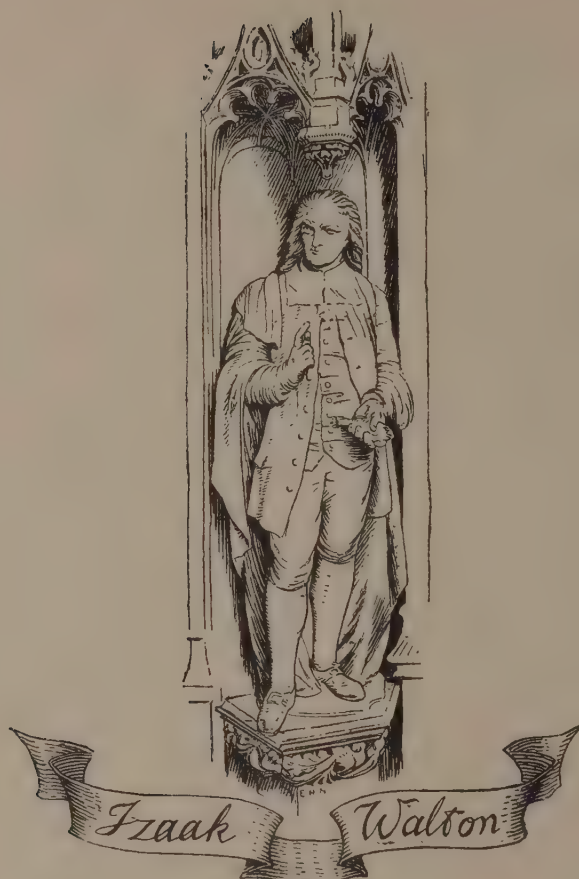
Dogmatical censure is right only when a big artist allows himself to be misled by too much praise, and trifles with his good genius, as Sir Edwin Landseer did.

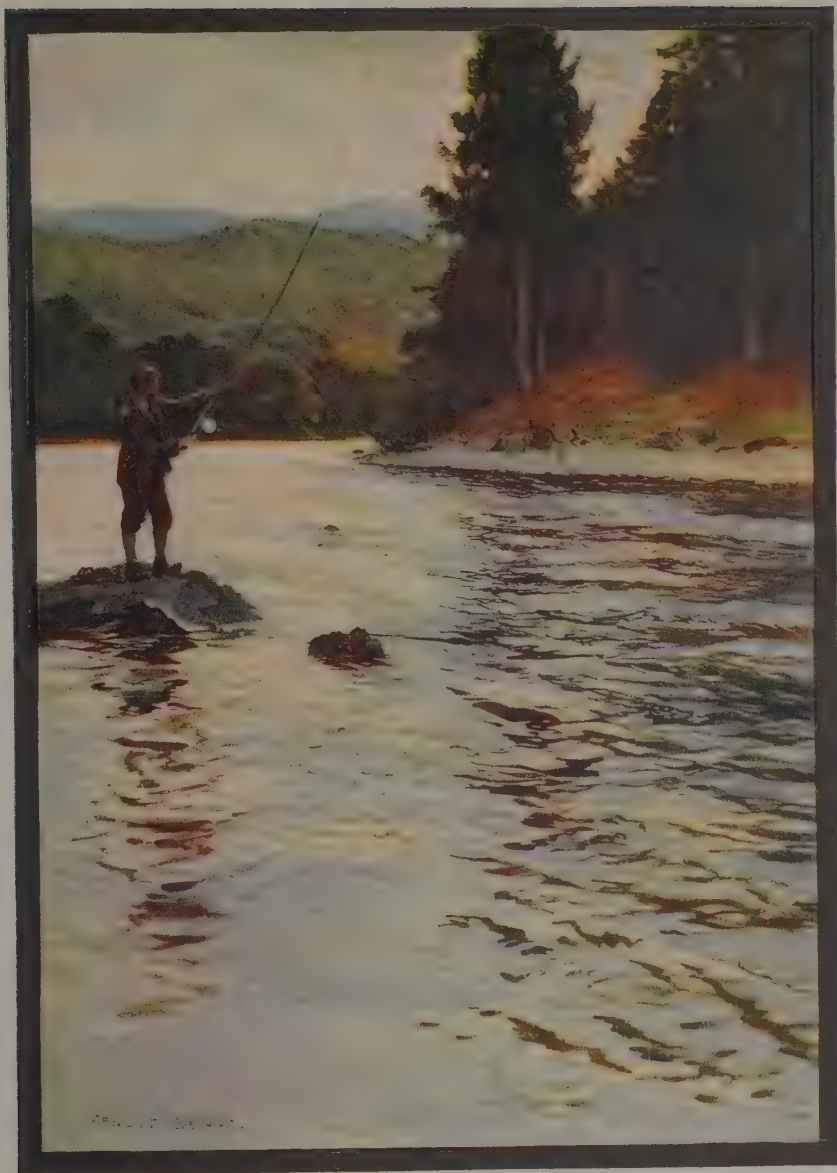
Though it is impossible in several respects to write well about painting, yet the handling of words is much freer in *unillustrated* books and articles than in articles and books which have many prints and plates, when a writer considered as a writer is always sacrificed—and sacrificed inevitably, and in several ways—to the illustrations. He is an art-editor as well as a writer,

for instance, so his research is twofold ; he has a pair of books to produce within the same binding ; and the chapters themselves, their composition and their method of appeal, are thwarted continuously by the need of numerous prints and plates, which attract everybody's attention away from the chapters and their history.

You see, however numerous the illustrations may be, they need neither much time nor fatiguing concentration from anyone who looks at them closely ; and because they excite curiosity, and give us the feeling that we are very busy with our minds when we are not really so, it is always to them that we turn as soon as we buy a book on the history of pictures. Many persons are too lazy to go from the prints and plates into the chapters, and only a person here and there starts out from the beginning and reads on to the end. As a rule, indeed, the reading is done at random, in a scrappy and patchy manner, a page or so here, a half-chapter there, and a whole chapter in another place, not many readers making the same first choice. And these being the invariable effects of many illustrations, their incessant influence on readers is a thing to be remembered in the literary composition. The writer must give to his subject-matter quite as much devoted care as other writers give to theirs, but his handling must be different, since his chapters will be read in a non-consecutive way, as anthologies are. By hook or by crook he must comply with conditions which he cannot alter, any more than a dramatist can alter the conditions imposed upon him, partly by the stage itself, and partly by new social fashions and old social customs. Intense abbreviation is the art which modern playwrights have studied throughout their professional experience. Take *The Gay Lord Quex* as an example. It contains 28,421 printed words, and only 17,805 are in the dialogue : an average of 4452 words per act. Here the craft of writing has enforced upon it from outside a painful and continuous discipline of cramp, yet it must seem free, free and at ease, so that its human illusions may appear to be like real persons living among unartificial surroundings.

In the craft which I go on studying, year after year, there is also much compression and much rewriting, but directness in development is a thing to be shunned, because it needs readers who read consecutively. The thing to be attained, as well as one is able to get it, is a discursive orderliness, a roundabout method. The chapters should move not as literary steamers, but as literary sailing ships. There is nothing rosy in How to Begin and How to End.





SALMON FISHING ON THE FASKALLY WATER. A Colour-Plate in
"Angling and Art in Scotland," written and illustrated by ERNEST BRIGGS, R. I.
(1866-1913). Printed from the Original Blocks by permission of the Artist's Executors.

CHAPTER I

A WALTON IN WATER-COLOUR : THE LATE ERNEST BRIGGS, R.I.

I

HE is the only painter of our time whose name, whenever we see it in print, or hear it spoken, should recall to memory a large number of pictures that belong, directly or indirectly, to Angling in British Art. Though attracted by other motifs also, he is at his best when he makes lyrics in colour, and particularly in water-colour, to express his deep affection for the Scottish countrysides where he angled.

Ernest Briggs wrote very well on his angling experiences, like several artists among his forerunners ; and I remember that three living writers on fishing—the delightful humorist, William Caine, Mr. J. Shirley-Fox, and Mr. Romilly Fedden—are painters.¹ I choose Briggs for my first chapter, not because I wish to magnify his gifts, but because we have the whole of his work as a Walton who painted with diligent sincerity.

II

In his art, which developed slowly, Briggs recorded from year to year how he loved the magic of country life by riversides and on lakes, but he did not live long enough to reap the full reward of his patience, a patience so humble that it caused him to look upon himself as a lifelong beginner. Many other painters of his generation, with no more talent, took the word " originality " for their guide, and tried with far-sought and dear-bought efforts to give art a new earth and a new heaven, telling themselves and the world that, of course, the proper aim for inventive minds will for ever be the production of something unexpected and quite new. Briggs thought no more about novelty-hunting than Charles Lamb thought of Coleridge's planned Pantisocracy, where all the virtues were to thrive ; and as Lamb was original because

¹ Romilly Fedden's *Golden Days from the Fishing-Log of a Painter in Brittany* was published in 1919.

he was born so, and because he never wished to be anyone but himself, so Briggs made his home in the studies that he liked best, and paid no heed to current speculations, with the coming and going of miraculous new "isms." Then, at the very moment when his gradual advance was becoming rapid, fortune became his foe, and he died suddenly, from heart disease, in his forty-eighth year.

Is he to be among the short-lived artists who live on in their best work after they are dead? Tom Girtin is one of the Futurists who died young; Bonington is another, like William Müller, George Mason, Fred Walker, John Leech, Charles Furse; and let us hope that Ernest Briggs, in his happiest work as a painter-angler, will not die twice. Why should he not find a home in that delightful old-English fondness for pastoral pleasures which Izaak Walton inherited, and which has done more than anything else to make *The Compleat Angler* very welcome to that general reader who *does* generally read? If Walton had confined himself to fishing technique alone, as Peter Beckford at a later date confined himself to hunting technique, his appeal would have been too sectarian for the reading world outside his own sport.

We learn from Walton, more than from anyone else, that angling in art, whether in words or in lines and colours, must rise above the technical needs of a sport, attaining qualities that are at least near to the imaginative interpretation of nature and life. Now it happens that Ernest Briggs is among a very small number of painters who have been praised ardently by those fly-fishers who are not painters also, and who, as a rule, look for literal fact when they see a picture of their sport, as though art were a window-pane through which a fisherman is seen busily at work. One of these experts has said of Briggs: "He is far and away the best angling artist I have any knowledge of." He adds: "There have been hitherto only three draughtsmen known to me who combined technical knowledge of angling with the power of delineating the craft satisfactorily." These words imply, and the implication is unjust, that Briggs is only a technical illustrator of angling, to whom camera-like facts are more valuable than elusive problems of landscape and figure painting.

All genuine artists despise mere literal fact. Indeed, they do not know literal fact because their eyes see imaginatively, not factfully. This is what Mr. J. L. Garvin means when he says of Shakespeare: "The imaginative interpretation of the spirit of life is his aim; he will not be clogged or hampered by technical correctitude; he does not think about it. These exterior things

are but a lantern carried, in itself no guide. To throw more light upon the mind and heart and soul of man he makes free with details to reveal the inner truth. Of course, he is right." And J. M. W. Turner keeps us constantly face to face with the same disregard for literal fact, and the same desire to pass through finite things into infinitude; and though the greatest artists have a guidance of their own which lesser men cannot copy or emulate, yet the lesser men also, if they intend to do their best, must remember that visual objects should be to their handicraft what items of building material are to great architecture. There is no future in a literal fact unless it is put by the right skill into the right place to help a piece of constructive work that is worth bringing to completion. Separate leaves are literal facts, and we cannot see trees correctly till we mass the leaves into foliage, and note the distinguishing patterns made by light and shade on the foliage of different species and genera of trees. This way of seeing is a synthesis, an act of composition; and as soon as laymen begin to see trees intelligently, synthetically, they begin to draw near to the needs of painters, whose brushes and pigments are used all day long in the necessary act of cancelling superabundant facts, in order to produce a general effect which is within the province of art.

In other words, to know precisely how much to leave out, how much to leave in, and what at the last should be added in a few touches—these questions weigh upon an artist both during and after his hours of constructive labour. In the case of Ernest Briggs they were always exceedingly difficult questions, because he was not a painter born, a painter with a style in his blood, like J. S. Sargent.

Born of Yorkshire parents in 1866, at Broughty Ferry, near Dundee, he was educated partly at the London University Schools, partly at the Leeds University, where he began to study for a mining engineer; but his health being delicate, he persuaded his parents to let him take up art. Briggs worked at the Slade School, also at Hetherley's, like John Lavery, and then in Italy, where he travelled with Charles Holroyd.¹ His early pictures were mainly a record of the English Lake districts. In his twenty-third year, 1889, he found his way as exhibitor into the Royal Academy, with a Birket Foster-like bit of country-life called "Strawberry Gatherers." Afterwards, every year, the R.A. hung some of his work, and his last exhibit, in 1913, was bought for the Chantrey Bequest.

¹ Afterwards Sir Charles Holroyd, Director of the National Gallery, London, from 1903 to 1917.

His favourite scenery, like his favourite angling, was in Scotland, and I may add with truth that excellent fly-fishing was always very much easier to him than any result of his practice as a painter. To gain mastery over his brush, to work well with technical inspiration, not merely with patient care, this was the ideal that he kept before his mind as the thing best worth striving for with courage. As angler he had nothing more to learn, while as a painter he remained always at a new beginning, that lured him on and on into uncertain adventure. If he put his genial sport into a picture, his angler certainly did the right thing in the right way, but always in careful subordination to other and much greater varieties of knowledge, which he valued all the more highly because they eluded his brushes and colours, keeping him face to face with problems of art which he feared that he could never solve. Hence I should be very unjust if I spoke of him as an illustrator of angling.

On three occasions he painted his own portrait in angling pictures : ¹

1. "The Fir-Tree Island below the Linn," in the valley of the Ken ; a small figure standing on the rocky bankside, left ;

2. "Loch Lundy and Ben Tee from above Invergarry," where Briggs in the middle distance angles from a boat ; ²

3. "A Fight for a Life," another boating episode, where a hooked 30-lb. salmon hurls himself from Loch Pouлары.

To portray how a fly-fisher holds his rod, or how he chooses from the act of casting, a movement which is not altogether unpaintable ; to show how, when alone, he lands his catch, or how he stands in a river when a strong current of water swirls against his legs, while his line is electric with a salmon well hooked ; these things were ABC to Briggs, while his adventures among the problems of landscape painting belonged to an enchanted alphabet of art which extended indefinitely beyond XYZ. Consider, for instance, the handling of swift water in paint under changing light from a variable sky.

Oh ! the troubles, the cares, the repetitions of half-failure, over and over again, that weigh upon every artist who falls in love with the country, and who has courage to unite figure-painting to landscape ! Jean François Millet, referring to this drama of strife, says : "Art is not a diversion. It is a conflict, a complication of wheels in which one is crushed." The peculiarity of Briggs was that, though he would have agreed with Millet, he bore his inevitable lot as a painter with a true angler's untiring patience ; and partly for this

¹ See the plates in colour facing pp. 54, 98, and 122, *Angling and Art in Scotland*. A good water-colour portrait of Briggs, shown vigorously in the act of angling at Luib, was painted for Mrs. Briggs by A. T. Nowell, and I have chosen it for a plate in colour.

² This picture is in the J. B. Taylor Collection, Wynberg Park, South Africa.



TROUT FISHING IN GALLOWAY. *A Colour Plate in "Angling and Art in Scotland" (1908), written and illustrated by ERNEST BRIGGS, R.I. (1866-1913). Printed from the Original Blocks by permission of the Artist's Executors.*

reason his work remained entirely English, with a charm similar to that of the songs which Izaak Walton loved.

III

One of my friends has said that Briggs would not have remained serene in his art if "he hadn't let off steam as a thorough fly-fisher." This may well be true. Productive work in all of the arts has reactions from ardour into depression; and hence the furtive unhappiness that overshadowed Turner's lonely life. Michelangelo said that the birthday of a human being should be regarded not as a day of joy but as a day of mourning; and who does not remember also what Dr. Johnson wrote of "the black dog"? Happy is the artist who, when his black dog begins to bark, turns with joy to a hobby, as Gainsborough turned to his music! If young artists of the past had made it their hobby to be sportsmen also, they and their friends would have had a great deal less to fear in the unstable moods which have caused them to suffer greatly, and often to stumble badly.

Ernest Briggs said of angling that it put out of mind the worries of everyday life. When he fished, a hooked salmon or trout became to him what a battle nearly won is to a cool general.

Once he admitted that he lost for a while his coolness after hooking a wallop. It was on Loch Poullary when he raised and struck a 30-lb. salmon while angling with a light trout rod:

"Thaat's him!" cried his ghillie, Ronald; and Briggs knew that only a very large fish could have made that slow and sullen disturbance of the water, which left an impression on his mind's eye of a glimpse of purple and silver.

After waiting till the movement was quite complete, he gave the necessary sharp strike from the wrist:

"Hooked! yes! Or were the boat and I hooked to the fish, to be towed everlastingly about at the sweet will of the huge creature? At present, as he swam in measured and stately fashion around the boat, he seemed oblivious of the fact that a dangerous hook was in his mouth; but how long would that last? What would be his next move? Such questions as these lashed the mind, as with knees playing like castanets, one held on with hopeless determination to the alarmingly convex trout rod. . . . In the meantime, at any rate, the fish was behaving in a gentlemanly and sober manner, which allowed the decks to be cleared for action—also allowed me to recover some of the ordinary composure necessary in such an emergency. . . ."

For twenty minutes Briggs looked steadily, with eyes that ached, and became dimmed with mist, at the point where his line, like a thin bar of steel, cut its way through the water, as Ronald followed the fish around the loch, always watching for a visible sign of the sudden change in tactics which the big creature would be obliged to make.

Now and then Briggs exerted a firmer pressure on the unseen fish, and a series of electric shocks passed up the line. The salmon was losing his temper, and all at once he made a run, taking out fully fifty yards of line at lightning speed, then pitching himself sideways clean out of the water—a flash as of animated quicksilver. “My heart,” says Briggs, “came into my mouth, and it took several swallows to get it back into place. There is something superb in a display of strength such as this. . . .”

With trepidation Briggs raised the point of his rod. Ah! the line tightened, the fish was still on! Then inch by inch, as in a tug of war, the fifty yards of line was taken on the reel again, till at last the fish was near once more to the boat, and another sulky procession around the loch began. Dinner-time had passed, the day was closing towards dusk, and the salmon was not in the least fagged. Indeed, he sulked formidably.

“All that could be done to rouse the monster *was* done, and in the end the simple expedient of tapping the extremity of the butt of the rod with a small stone was successful. Away he went again, to the accompaniment of the raucous shrieking of my reel. Would he never stop? There were only seventy-five yards of line altogether; but on, on he went, and smaller and smaller, and thinner and thinner became that coil of silk upon the drum of my reel. At last the fatal moment arrived; the last yard of line was run out. I pointed the rod at the fish, and stretched out my rod to the utmost, with the vain idea of gaining another yard or so. There was one fierce pull, and for an instant the water boiled in the far distance, and then—the sickening slackening of the line.

“May it be put down to my credit! I merely remarked: ‘You can row home now, Ronald,’ as I slowly wound up the loose line. Fortunately Ronald helped me, or I might have burst.

“But what was *this*? the line was beginning to tighten up again. ‘By Jove! he’s on, he’s on *still*!’ I shouted. And so he *was*. The sudden strain at the end of such a long rush had stopped the fish and turned him back. . . .

“With feverish haste I wound in the slack, trying to keep pace with the fish which was running now at furious speed toward the boat; again, as at the end of the first rush, did he hurl himself bodily out of the water; but this time he nearly terminated his career for good and all, by flinging himself into the boat.

“ ‘ Man ! was thaat no *wicked* ? ’ exclaimed Ronald, smacking his lips with relish over the word ; and I thought the epithet well-fitted for the circumstance. . . . ”

After another tremendous run the salmon played a wily trick, for, while Briggs was looking eagerly straight ahead, a swish and a plunge were heard all at once behind his back ; the angler turned swiftly, and was just in time to see the monster throw himself out of the water on the farthest side of the boat. For a moment Briggs took it to be another salmon ; but no, it was his old foe, who had moved in a circle under water, and had still enough vigour to display once more an astounding agility.

Briggs knew that his line, in a complete bow, had to pull against the whole weight of enclosed water ; and when the gut gave way, suddenly, he was not at all ashamed to be defeated by such a champion.

This good fight is taken from the painter's autobiography, *Angling and Art in Scotland*, a book of vivid and genial observation. There are also thirty-two plates in colour, that show a wide range of art. The blocks were approved by Briggs himself, and, with very kind permission from Mrs. Briggs and the Executors, I am able to include several of them in my choice of illustrations. In this I am very fortunate, as the best water-colours of angling by Ernest Briggs are far-scattered in private collections. One set of half a dozen belongs to Mr. J. B. Taylor, of Wynberg in South Africa, for example. Only one large print (10 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. by 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.) has been published after Briggs, “ Trout Fishing on the Tummel ” ; so that prints in books should be valued highly.

In *Fishing at Home and Abroad*, a 10-guinea volume published by the London and Counties Press (1913), there are some good things by Ernest Briggs, bound up in the part written by Sir Herbert Maxwell, Bart. ; but it is to the artist's illustrated autobiography that I go with the greatest pleasure.

The Frontispiece is a happy portrait of a sportswoman in the act of angling, touched with a studying gentleness of hand that recalls the figurework in water-colour by a much earlier artist, J. M. Wright, who lived from 1777 to 1866. E. J. Gregory's dainty record has a closer observation in the liquid brushwork, and James Linton, rightly called the Metsu of English Water-Colour, would have put a more constructive precision into the lady's figure. In this portrait Briggs is pretty near to the “ stained ” method of water-colour, the earliest method, in which artists were draughtsmen who tinted their work, not painters who desired to be great colourists. But ambition grew, and through more than a century painters in water-colour have been in vogue, often as competitors against oil-pigments. It has happened generally that

craftsmen of every sort have tried to extend the boundaries imposed upon them by their chosen materials, and have become more and more ambitious, ornate and opulent, till at last they have caused a reaction against themselves. To-day, indeed, an attempt is being made to revive and renew the real water-colour drawing, and anglers should remember this fact when they need technical illustrations of their craft.

Though Briggs in some of his water-colours came near to the staining method, his heart was set on the means by which he could pass through draughtsmanship into free painting ; and it is certain also that his practice as a fly-fisher, by storing his mind with landscapes, first in the Yorkshire dales, stimulated his ambition as a painter. He says, for example, in his autobiography :

“ There are two Arts that might aptly walk side by side, as Plato walks with Aristotle in Raphael’s ‘ School of Athens.’ The one is the Art of Landscape Painting, the other, ‘ The Gentle Art,’ the ancient craft of Angling ; and in the beautiful land of Scotland, either may be pursued to the utmost limit of advantage.

“ They have much in common ; each requires an observant eye, and a hand trained to obey that eye ; and hidden in the bosom of each lie the keys of the mystery and the poetry contained in the great field of Nature. Moreover, there is one closely-connected link for all time between them ; it is that common, though wonderful and ever-changing fluid, which we call Water.

“ A landscape painting may possess charm without the introduction of that exquisite element into its composition, but a roomful of such would appear monotonous ; for whether water be placid and calm, or turbulent and rushing, or whether it be invested—as in its more awful moods—with a terrible and sublime power, at all times it exercises upon the human mind an influence beyond the pale of every other element ; while for angling, water is a necessity.

“ A man may be a painter and yet not an angler, though it were better for him were he both ; for in the pursuit of angling he would gain a wider knowledge of Nature and the habits of her creatures—of the tone relations of water to sky. And so also may he be a fisherman and yet not paint landscapes, but were he to do so he would find an added delight in his rambles by river and lake, for the angler appreciates the beauties of scenery more than others, through his intimate knowledge of Nature.

“ So are the two crafts strongly allied, and to the man who can combine them falls the largest share of enjoyment. . . .”

IV

When Briggs in his book angles for the first time in Galloway, accompanied by his three brothers, he and they are in their early teens and velveteens.



THE GENTLE ART. *Frontispiece to "Angling and Art in Scotland,"*
(Longmans, 1903), written and illustrated by ERNEST BRIGGS, R.I. (1866-
1913). Printed from the Original Blocks by permission of the Artist's Executors.

They made their headquarters at Dalry, St. John's Town of Dalry, as it is called in the Ordnance Map, a village on the banks of the Ken, with a street of whitewashed cottages, primly neat and strong, that climb eastward into a health-giving wind. The boys learn that there are six good women in the village who have reached the noble old age of ninety.

As country lads of every rank will always wish to pass through their primitive angle-age, often with a bent pin and a piece of whipcord tied to a stick, I love to read about boy-anglers, and to see them in pictures. They are types of the very earliest fishers, so the romance of their sport makes the far-distant near, and the primeval past present. Also, as J. M. Webb's American Angling Song says :

" The urchin with the pin and string
Can chum with millionaire and king ;
Vain pride is a forgotten thing
Out angling."

But Briggs at thirteen does not appear before us as a primitive ; he is trying to become an expert, and his brothers are rivals. Still, they remain boys, and the chapters on their adventures are good to read. Ernest fishes with worms, while the others, cocky and cocksure, tickle the water with flies, and he hates them for it. Generally they beat him in numbers, but his fish, he believes, are of a larger size. Towards the end of their tour, Ernest gives himself up to the charms of fly-fishing, never again to take to the worm, except as a last resource.

One brother is called " The Skipper " because he knows how to make plans and how to enforce them, while another is " The Duke," his manners being persuasive, and his habits extravagant. He is decorated with flies and casts ; worms fall frequently from his pockets ; also, with uncomfortable haste, he puts his rod together as he walks to a riverside, and begins to fish before the others. Even worse, he catches more fish, though his brothers are certain that his tackle can never be depended upon.

In their first adventure on the Black Water of Dee they catch perhaps a dozen decent fish, extremely beautiful trout to look at, " having a multiplicity of black spots, on a creamy ground, with an iridescent sheen over all." A pounder is a big trout in the Black Water of Dee, and anglers on the Test and Itchen, who catch three- and four-pounders, may turn up their noses at a pounder gloriously coloured. " Yet there is no doubt," says Briggs, " that a fine-conditioned pound trout, in many lochs and rivers of Scotland, will, when hooked, give quite as much trouble to kill as the three-pounder in the

Test, and even run farther and faster. Why the fish should be so much more game for their size in the north I do not know, but it is an accredited fact."

The chapters have some very good character-sketches. There is one of Don Malloch, an old keeper who works for Mr. Place of Loch Dochart House, in a Perthshire glen, and who keeps watch and ward over two heather-fringed lochs, Lochs Marachan and Essan. Then there is Tam Lambie, a very tall shepherd, with very long, attenuated legs, a sort of petrified human body, who aids Briggs in a combined attack on Don Malloch's refusal to allow fishing in Essan and Marachan. The keeper is happy to get drunk on whisky supplied by Briggs, and glad also to agree that he is Mr. Place when Mr. Place is awa' ; but, drunk or sober, he never allows Briggs to throw his fly over those two enchanted lochs, where " twa wee bit fushes " caught by Malloch, are described by Tam Lambie as " twenty-twa and twenty-sax pund." The whole scene is Stevensonian, and thus a credit to Scotland for ever ! In spite of too much whisky, Malloch lived to be more than ninety-one, for at this age he made a grave mistake while angling on Loch Dochart. A very small trout took his fly, and Malloch hurled it over his head into the water again. Briggs watched this rapid change from fly-fishing to the activity of an enchanted flying-fish. Malloch came ashore to Briggs, and talked in a voice that echoed and re-echoed among the surrounding hills. He was nearly deaf, but his memory seemed to be good, and his congenital thirst remained as amiable as Falstaff's.

Briggs knew at Tomdown a young boatman called Angus, who spoke very gently and slowly, with a soft and pleasant Highland drawl, but who treated some of his employers with tyrannical downrightiness. One morning Angus went out on Loch Poulary with an elderly Scotsman, Mr. C., a humorous little man with a mild temperament. In the evening they returned with two magnificent specimens of *Salmo ferox*, weighing respectively twelve and thirteen pounds. Next morning Briggs spoke to Angus about the catch, offering his congratulations, but Angus, only half-pleased, answered :

" Indeed—yes—sir !—they—were—fery—nice fish. But we should have had a better basket than *thaat*. Ay ! It wass this way, ye see. It would be about ten o'clock when I was starting to row up the loch, and fery soon after C. was putting out the trolls ; a fish cam' on one of the rods with a g-r-e-a-t *rush*, and away went the reel. While I wass winding in the spare rod, C., he wass playing the big fish ; and chest then she made a great run—and what did he *do*—but he must catch the handle of his reel in his watchgyard,

indeed yes ! And as any individual would be telling, snap went the steel t-r-a-c-e, as she might be a thread, and the fish, she wass away.

"The old chentleman he says, 'Eh ! that's a peety, Angus ! but never mind, mebbe we'll have another chance again. We'll have a dram, Angus.'

"But I says to him, says I, 'No. I'll *no* have a dram ! It wass a fery foolish trick, whatever !'

"'Ay, Angus,' says he, 'it wass thaate ! but indeed I did not mean to *do* it ; chest have a dram for luck, Angus.'

"But I says to the old chentleman, 'Tamn yer drams,' says I, 'I'll *no* have a dram ! It wass a fery silly thing to *do*.'

"So he would be having his dram alone. Yes, yes—chest by himself. But after he was putting fresh taeckle on his rod, we started again, and he had hardly got the line out when—I'll be blowed !—but another big fish cam' on ! and the old chentleman he wass fery nervous, he wass shaking like the top of the rod ; he would be thinking of the way he wass losing the last one. But I got this fish aall right ; it was one of those fairack, and a fery fine fish it wass. Old C., he wass chest as proud as Punch, and he says to me, 'What did I say, Angus, we would be getting another chance yet ? Ye'll have to tak' a dram *now*, Angus.'

"'Na, na,' I says ; 'it's a graand fish, but it'll no bring back the one ye lost, whatever.'

"It wass fery game that fairack, and it took us a long time to land : by thaate time it would be lence-time, and we cam' *ashore*.

"It was after lence when we got the second fairack. The old chentleman, he wass for trying the fly, but I told him I would stick to the minnow, for she wass taking fery well, and we would have had twa big fish aalready if it wass not for his tamned foolish behaviour.

"It wass no long indeed before I hookit the other fairack, and I told old C. to take care of his watchgyard this time, for it wass a wonderful chance he wass having to hook three big fish in one day——"

"Interrupting, Briggs said : 'And so you got your third fish all right ?'

"Ay ! we got the third fish aall right ; and it wass a fery *cu*-rious thing, although the old chentleman wass so foolish over the first fish, I said to him, 'Well, well, I'll tak' a dram with ye *now*, for indeed I never saw any individual with so much luck. . . .'

Briggs writes also of another ghillie, John Campbell, "probably the best salmon fisherman at Dalmally" :

"He is indeed one of the prettiest and neatest casters that a man need wish to see. . . . None of the new-fangled ideas find favour with John. He swears by a good eighteen or nineteen feet salmon rod and heavy line. He despises the degeneracy of the modern school, with its preference for light fourteen or sixteen feet rods, and tackle to match ; and it is surprising—in

spite of his short stature—how delicately, and with what precision, he can make the fly drop on the water, with the heavy weapon which he affects. . . . In spite of his being a devoted fisherman, Campbell also holds the singular idea that the only incident worth caring about in salmon fishing, is the hooking of the fish. After that feat is accomplished, he feels no further interest or excitement in the playing and landing part of the business. When John made this statement to me, I questioned him further, suggesting, in that case, that it did not matter to him whether the fish were subsequently landed, or lost. But he then showed a certain inconsistency, inasmuch as he confessed that, after hooking a fish and handing the rod to another party, should the salmon break away, he would feel absolutely miserable for the rest of the day.

“ I have heard of other lordly sportsmen who consider, having hooked a salmon, that the ensuing proceedings have little interest for them, and merely hand over the rod to an attendant for him to despatch the fish—an action which is beyond the comprehension of most mortals. It is no doubt very well to feel that you have hooked a salmon nicely ; but in about five cases out of six, the fish is invisible when he takes the fly, consequently there is very little skill exercised, or excitement gained, in the fact of hooking him. The skill lies in the casting, and in the management of the fish, after he is hooked ; and the excitement is caused by the wish to know what his size may be, and by the uncertainty of being able to predict what course of behaviour he may adopt to free himself, before he is finally deposited upon the bank.”

Dr. Edward Hamilton quotes from a fly-fisher who says : ¹

“ The chief glory of salmon fishing lies in the rise, which is certainly magnificent, and the only difficulty of the capture as a rule consists in the strike. So much is this the case that I have known veteran salmon fishers who, when salmon were plentiful, made it a habit to resign the rod into the hands of an assistant after checking the first rush or two ; not that I blame the salmon fisher.”

Hamilton, I fear, would have quarrelled with John Campbell, for he had no patience with this attitude toward salmon fishing :

“ It shows such ignorance ! ” he declares. “ Why, any tyro can raise a salmon and hook him, because, in ninety-nine times out of a hundred, the fish, from his mode of taking the fly, hooks himself, and fine casting, although it may be necessary in some cases, is as a rule not so very important ; but it requires considerable skill, with a proper accompaniment of patience and perseverance, to kill a salmon. The cream of the sport is the excitement of playing and killing a fish—not in the rise. . . . ”

¹ *Recollections of Fly-fishing, Salmon, Trout, and Grayling.* By Edward Hamilton, M.D., F.L.S., etc., 1884, pp. 9-10.



McNAUGHTON OF LUIB, PERTHSHIRE, on The Double Bend Pool. A Colour-Plate in "Angling and Art in Scotland" (Longmans, 1908), written and illustrated by ERNEST BRIGGS, R.I. (1866-1913). Printed from the Original Blocks by permission of the Artist's Executors.

When specialists differ, onlookers have reason to thank heaven that variety and relativity are amusing. Why should not a John Campbell enjoy sport in his own way, after he has become a veteran in the art of playing and landing salmon?

V

Briggs picks a bone gently with Andrew Lang, who says in his *Angling Sketches* that little artifice is required in loch fishing. Briggs loves river fishing as keenly as Lang, and admits that it is less friendly to duffers than fishing from a boat in a loch, but he cannot find fault with one sport because it differs from another. When fishing from a boat, he says, more fish are risen when a long line is cast, and the act of hooking them needs more skill than in shorter throws. He adds:

“There is no doubt that a great deal of skill is exercised in the striking of trout in still water: and the angler must have quick sight and a delicate touch, so that he may be instantly aware when a fish is taking the fly, even below the surface. Those few seconds of hesitation so often lose the fish. Unlike a salmon, a trout requires to be struck instantaneously on sight, except on those occasions when he throws himself right out, or half out of the water, taking the fly on his downward course; in which case several seconds should be allowed before striking—by no means an easy thing to remember. . . .”

In river fishing it is a fatal thing to drag your flies through the water; there is a current which carries the fly for a considerable distance, causing it to pass in a natural way over many trout; and if you drag it towards you, and thus across, or against the current, the movement of the fly is unnatural.

“But in a loch,” says Briggs, “if no motion is given to the fly, it simply sinks in one spot, and so loses the chance of covering much water. It is better to allow the fly to remain perfectly quiescent for a few seconds, simply because a fly which is sunk deeper and drawn upwards is more deadly. Why should that be so? Probably because fish feed more on flies which are rising up through the water than on those which are floating on the surface. The deadliness of that destructive machine known as the otter, which drags along a series of submerged flies, would alone point to the fact that it is *not* detrimental to obtaining good sport on a lake to move flies through the water at a fairly rapid pace. It is also a most noticeable fact, in some lakes, that more trout can be caught by trolling the flies behind the boat, than by casting. This is, fortunately, by no means always the case; in fact, in many places, that mode of fishing gives small results. But on a good many lochs, notably on a certain loch in Sutherlandshire, which I

have fished, it is decidedly so. On this loch, many more fish can be caught by slowly rowing the boat along, with trailing flies, than by the most untiring casting. And in casting, the deeper the flies are sunk, the more likelihood is there of catching fish, for the trout, when they do rise, seldom break the surface of the water. . . ."¹

Whenever Briggs writes of trout, the minor royalties of the freshwater states, he is particularly himself, as though he likes them even more than he likes the great and mysterious autocrat, the salmon. As a rule, specialist anglers give their hearts to the sea trout, one of the gamest fish that swims. Francis Francis said of the sea trout : " like the champion of the light weights, when he is hooked, he is here, there, and everywhere, now up, now down, now in the water, and now out." As boxing matches between light weight swimmers have never been a sport, I don't know why the activity of hooked sea trout should suggest to any mind the movements of a boxer on land. This analogy would never have been chosen by a painter-angler, and I note also that Cholmondeley Pennell chose simpler and better words when he wrote of the sea trout :

" There is no fish that swims," he said, " which will rise so boldly at the fly, or which when hooked shows for its size such indomitable English pluck, I was about to say, but at any rate, such gallant and determined courage ; in fact, the bright, graceful *Salmo trutta* is the most game and mettlesome, if not on the whole the most beautiful, fish known to Europe, or probably to the world."

Would Briggs have agreed to all this laudation ? I think not. Certainly he would have smiled over the very feeble descriptive phrase, " the bright, graceful *Salmo trutta* " ; and his many experiences with Scottish loch trout would have prevented him from writing dictatorially about the gameness of different fish. In his autobiography he notes again and again the courage of small trout, like those of Lochinvar, which may average about half a pound on a good day, with an occasional pounder with which to top up his basket. He has never seen a fish heavier than a pound and a quarter taken out of Lochinvar, but, whatever the size, all are of excellent quality, and exceedingly game when hooked : rather long in shape, with very large tails, which give them great power in the water.

Briggs knew Lochinvar in its best days, when Thomas Burnside, a game-keeper of the old school, ruled over the fishing, with so much caution that he never admitted that any day was good for sport, lest the reputation of

¹ *Angling and Art in Scotland*, pp. 156-157.

his loch should be harmed by a poor catch. If you arrived in the morning at the lochside, and saw the water dimpled with rising fish, Burnside would pour a chill over your hope by saying : " Na, na ! thaat's no the right thing at a' ; there's a nasty glassy *glare* on the waterr." If your face still remained in the least ardent, Burnside would add : " I dinna like thae nasty, white, towrin' paaks [high thunder-clouds] ; the troot never tak' when they're about." On the other hand, if the morning happened to be crystal-clear, with no white towering clouds, and if you mentioned these facts to Burnside, the old gamekeeper would shake his head solemnly. " Ah, no," he would answer, " but likely they'll get up with the day ! I fear there's ower muckle *fire* in the air the day." Even if the morning were ideal for fishing, with a greyish sky and a steady breeze from the west, Burnside would guard his loch from any possible chance of disappointing you, by saying with grim foreboding : " I like not that *slated* appearance on the waterr."

When Burnside was not rowing on his loch he loved to pose at a funeral, a six-footer of immutable sorrow. To anglers who found him away from home, his wife would say in a routine, " Likely he'll be at a funeral ; I think I heard there was ane about somewhere."

Many a year ago he came at last to his own end of ends, his long hame ; he did not live to know that his friend Briggs had put him lovingly into a book, with a picture of his cottage by the lochside, and a fine tumble of flushed clouds gathering high above a background of mountains.

VI

Among the thirty-two coloured plates there are a dozen of active angling, but all of the others are associated in a great many minds with memories of pleasant fishing, like the Lochs Poulary, Skae, and Wee, and the River Tummel at Pitlochry. The landscapes drawn in words are loyally Scottish, like the water-colours ; and when I remember that this happy book was published in 1908, just five years before its author's early death, I remember also its final paragraph, which refers to the health and strength that Scotland's mountain air bestows on sportsmen :

" Ah ! a man feels young in Glendochart even at the age of ninety. If you will but live your life out of doors in this envied valley, fishing-rod in hand in summer, and gun or curling stone in winter, you can put behind you all fear of ill-health or old age. . . ."

Briggs was thinking of Don Malloch, and of many another veteran who

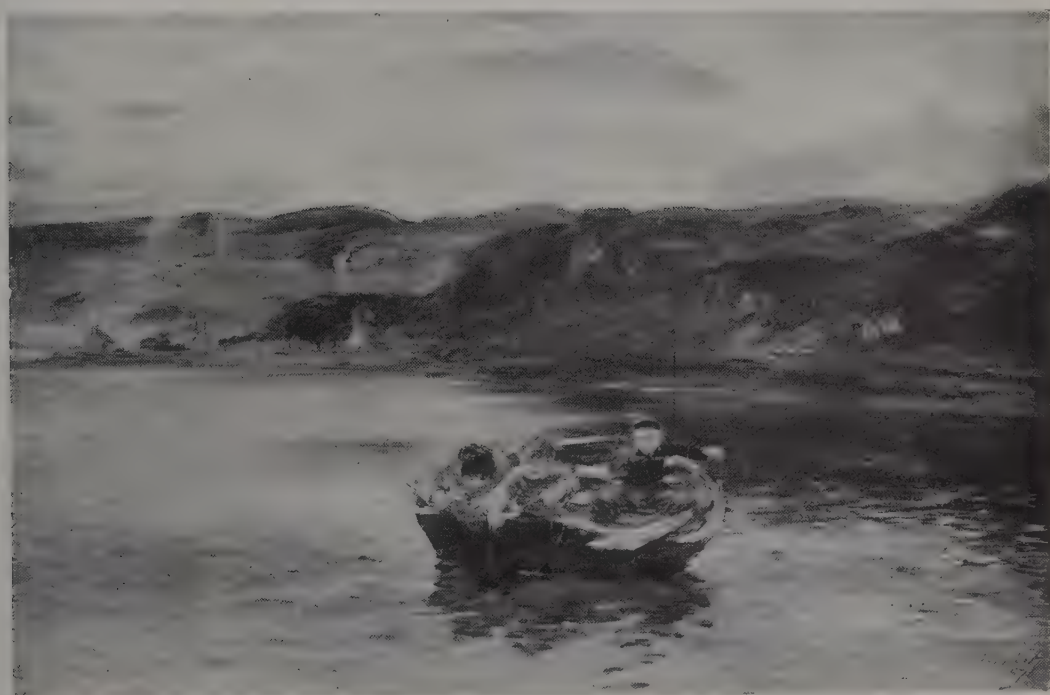
had lived to be hale at ninety. Of himself he thought little. One may doubt whether angling and its excitements were as good for Ernest Briggs as he believed they were, since it was heart disease that cut short the brief seasons of his perishable days ; but if at all bad for his delicate health, they filled his pictures with freshness, and his autobiography with friendliness.

It was never my lot to meet him, but his companionship circulates from his work, convincing me that Ernest Briggs did more for angling in art—as painter, as writer, and as fly-fisher—than was done by anyone of his contemporaries. But one of his best friends, Norman Wilkinson, is following his example, so that some school traditions of angling in art are being formed north of the Tweed. We may call them tartan traditions added to the old history of British sporting pictures and prints.





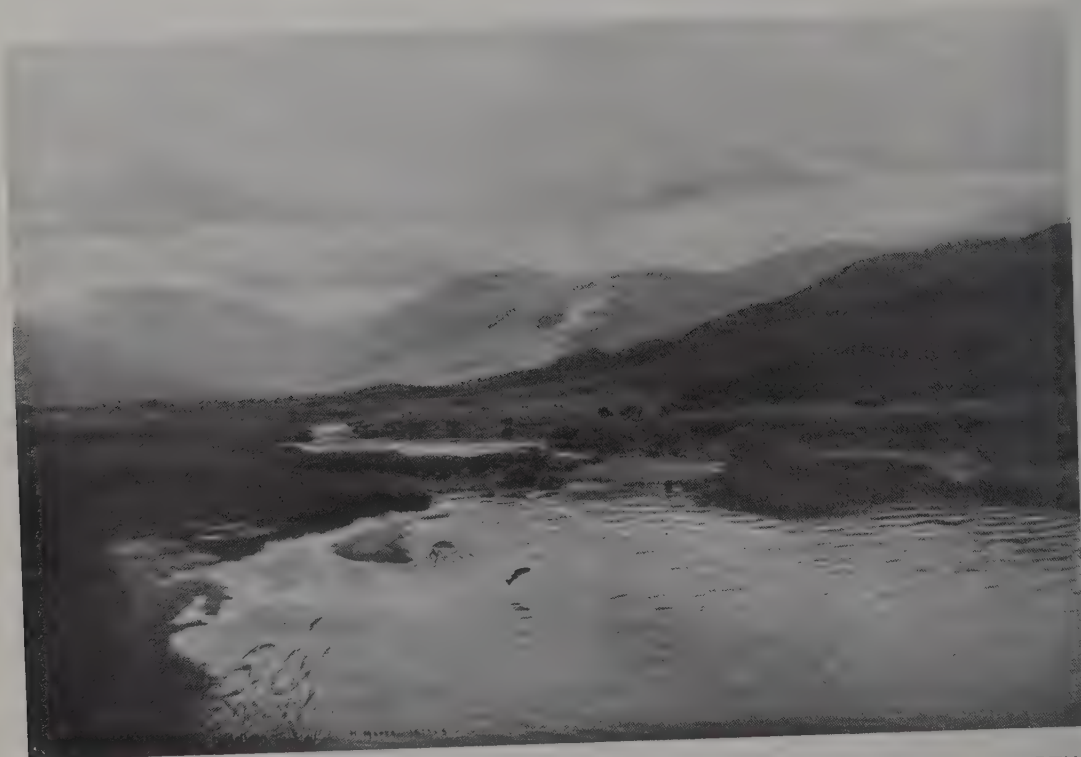
LANDING A BIG 'UN. *From an Oil Painting by* HAMILTON MACALLUM (1841-1896). *Dated 1878. Photograph by W. A. Mansell & Co.*



THE LITTLE ANGLERS. *An Oil Painting by* WILLIAM McTAGGART, R.S.A. (1835-1910). *Dated 1876. Photograph by W. A. Mansell & Co.*



ANGLING IN SCOTLAND, 1879. *From an Oil Painting (24 in. x 14 in.) by DAVID FARQUHARSON, A.R.A. (1839 - 1907). By permission of D. Croal Thomson, Esq.*



STRATH FILLAN AND THE DOCHART, PERTH-SHIRE, WITH A LEAPING SALMON. *Dated 1877-8. From a picture by HENRY MOORE, R.A. (1831-1895). Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photo-graph by W. A. Mansell & Co.*

CHAPTER II

THE LAND-AND-SEA PAINTERS IN THEIR RELATION TO ANGLING

I

NORMAN WILKINSON is the most prominent living artist who has blended the land and sea, while showing in his varied work that he is devoted to angling, as a painter who is also a fly-fisher. So I wish to connect him with a noble tradition in British Art which has not yet received enough study from writers, though it has enabled a few painters, age after age, to reveal a pretty equal fondness for sea life and riverside landscapes, united sometimes to marine fishing and Waltonian angling. We need a distinctive word to put a name upon this dual art, which has been more completely British than landscape painting alone, because it has represented a great deal more of our national history. Indeed, its continuous appeal as a production of art has needed the same double-hearted fervour which has made the Nelson Column in Trafalgar Square a beloved symbol of our little island's dependence on sea adventures.

About sixty years ago, an impassioned land-and-sea painter, J. C. Hook, elected a Royal Academician in 1860, became so popular that his work was known for a good many years as Hookscapes, or Hookscape painting, and one writer declared that the R.A. had preferred the Landseer family even to its land-seer painters. This remark applied not only to the four Landseers, John, Edwin, Charles, and Thomas, but also to those landscapists who cared little for marine pictures—the land-seers like Thomas Creswick, F. R. Lee, James W. Oakes, and William F. Witherington. As a matter of fact, the R.A. had been fair to the land-and-sea painters, choosing, from 1885 back to Turner's election as full-member in 1802, a varied number: Henry Moore, Colin Hunter, John Brett, Peter Graham, J. C. Hook, E. W. Cooke, W. Clarkson Stanfield, William Collins, and Sir A. W. Callcott.

When Norman Wilkinson was attracted by this dual art, in 1901, three influences entered his life as a painter :

1. The enterprise of some of his contemporaries—Brangwyn, Stanhope

Forbes, R. W. Allan, Albert Goodwin, W. L. Wyllie, Edwin Hayes, H. S. Tuke, C. Napier Hemy, William McTaggart, T. B. Hardy, Adrian Stokes, and David Farquharson.

2. The special and very different aims of three veterans, J. C. Hook, Napier Hemy, and John Brett.

3. The receding line of his dead forerunners, which went back as far as the year 1670, when Peter Monamy was born in Jersey. Thirteen years after Monamy's birth Walton died in Winchester, at the house of his son-in-law, Dr. Hawkins ; so we may say that the origin of British land-and-sea painting dates from Izaak Walton's lifetime.

Not less interesting is the fact that this various phase of art, though continuous and old, has drawn to itself, period after period, only a small number of painters, even a very small number when we think of it in relation to our country's insular position and seafaring needs and tastes. As a people we react against logic and are seldom rational ; to foreigners we seem to be an orderly disorder of wayward compromises ; and this explains why the British marine painters, though few in number, have been obliged by the practical needs of life to spend a part of their time in popular landscape painting. Had their work remained always at sea its appeal would not have been insular enough for the greatest maritime people in the world !

II

When Norman Wilkinson, in 1901, after studying for half a year in Paris, entered upon his chosen career, Brangwyn had finished his many sea changes, and I remember in Brangwyn's prolific work only one angling picture, "An Eastern Izaak Walton," painted on the busy quay at Constantinople, and reproduced by *The Graphic* in 1891, together with a Brangwyn sketch of trade fishing from rafts on the Danube.

I have chosen for illustration a typical early picture by H. S. Tuke, exhibited in 1901 at the R.A. It has a boat which is beautifully drawn, and the two fisher-boys are really out of doors. The unity between them and the water and sky manifests that they were painted under the influence of the same technical inspiration, and by an artist who, while keeping away from French impressionism, had chosen some valuable hints from the open-air studies of Jules Bastien-Lepage.

This boat-fishing is in a bay, but similar fishing is done also in lochs, as several Scottish painters have shown. Only limits of space have cut out



A SUMMER EVENING. From the Oil Painting by H. S. TUKE.
R.A. (50in. x 61in.) Exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1901. The
Photograph by W. A. Mansell & Co. Published by the Artist's permission.

sea-fishing from this book. At present Mr. Tuke has painted nothing in the freshwater angling world. His catches come out of sea-water, and this year, in a new boat, his art and sport have been united in new pictures. To this day he speaks of the "Summer Evening" as one of his best works.

Compare this Tuke with the reproduction of an angling landscape by David Farquharson; and then recall to memory other very remarkable contrasts, like those between Wyllie, Hook, Brett, Napier Hemy, Henry Moore, William McTaggart, Hamilton Macallum, and Colin Hunter.

In 1901 Wyllie was fifty, and Hook eighty-one; Colin Hunter was sixty, but nearing the close of his life; he died in 1904. John Brett, A.R.A., a man of seventy, was within a year of his death, while Henry Moore, R.A., a genuine innovator, had ended his career in 1895, at the age of sixty-four. A year later John Brett passed away, in his seventy-first year, after applying to landscapes and the sea his faith as a leading supporter of the pre-Raphaelite School, combined with a passion of his own for scorching light and prismatic colour.

Hamilton Macallum, who died in 1896, was another of Norman Wilkinson's immediate forerunners, and from time to time he painted a picture that added a new note to fishing in art. But he was inclined to overdo his effects. Now and then he became almost a caricaturist of the sea, so intensely coloured were the shadows of his dappled water, and so much like burnished copper were the sun-tanned flesh tones of his fishermen and sailors, and of his outdoor toilers in the Highlands. In Press criticisms of the eighteenth-seventies, when such a leading paper as *The Manchester Courier* gave as many as seven long articles to an exhibition at the Royal Academy, Macallum had more foes than friends, usually; but, reviewed now, in his relation to his opportunities, he was a brave researcher who turned from studio work to painting in the open air, studying with ardour the mysteries of water and the magic of sunlight. Like Napier Hemy, who in 1901 was a virile painter of sixty, Macallum appealed to Norman Wilkinson as opposed to the influence of John Brett, who tried to attain the quality of mystery, not by suppressing details, but by calling up into pictorial presence as many items as he could assemble together within the staring light by which his colour-sense was more and more fascinated.

In 1886, there was an exhibition of Brett's holiday work done out of doors, usually from the quarter-deck of his yacht, and left untouched by any revision. The artist himself wrote for the catalogue a defence of his creed, telling his critics that if they found too much detail in his pictures, they had only to

stand farther off, and the detail would not be seen. One writer had complained that Brett had covered the surface of a canvas with an enormous number of little waves. Brett answered : " As a matter of fact I can affirm that these little waves are the only means that Nature herself possesses to express the largest area ever attempted to be represented by mortal man." The good man forgot that a multiplicity of little sun-touched waves moving along the surface of scintillating water could not be imitated on canvas by means of a multiplicity of little and idle wave-like lines of colour. Apt impressionism alone can give Art her own varied waters, her own lakes, and rivers, and the seas. If Brett had told his critics that his eyes were not normal, that their range of clear-sightedness was uncommonly spacious and vivid, he would have helped them to understand his aims and methods ; and he might have added with truth that Turner himself did not reach the period of impressionism till his marvellous eyes had failed a great deal, losing details in a perception that became more blurred, and thus more synthetic, as age and incessant work dimmed their sight. We owe vastly more in art to normal variations of eyesight in ageing painters than critics have admitted. Thus, for example, Rembrandt's development from delicate precision into enchanted breadth and mystery is in part a physical change, a fact in the art and science that oculists of Rembrandt's day practised inexpertly. Even Reynolds and Turner were unable to buy spectacles which oculists of to-day would approve. We have only to review the school of engravers trained by Turner's criticisms in order to learn that, while Turner's eyesight remained wonderfully clear, he was tempted pretty often to set too much store by detail, as in very minute touches of light on small engraved surfaces of water. Synthesis was not at all easy to Turner till he reached his final period, when, owing to failing eyesight, Nature's infinity of details became more and more a mystery of massed patterns enveloped by atmosphere, a changeful glamour of forms that appealed to his poetical imagination, in which romance and realistic drama were fused together.

Brett's eyesight was so uncommon that he said :

" Among sketchers and critics there is a widespread superstition that distance has a softening effect on the edges of objects ; that mountain profiles when seen through a large extent of dense atmosphere assume a blurred appearance. The exact reverse of this is true, and the value of finish in expressing distance depends on the possibility of giving sharpness to the definition. A far-off mountain, for instance, can be shown with a pale-grey tint hardly any darker than the sky if its edge is drawn delicately sharp,



BEDFORD. Engraved by J. T. Willmore after J. M. W. TURNER, R.A. (1775-1851). To illustrate *Angling* in a composition by Turner. From a proof lent by The Cotswold Gallery, London.



RIEVAULX ABBEY, YORKSHIRE. Engraved by E. Goodall after J. M. W. TURNER, R.A. Note the position of the angler. From a proof lent by The Cotswold Gallery, London.



LLANBERIS LAKE, NORTH WALES. Engraved by J. T. Willmore after
J. M. W. TURNER, R.A. From a proof lent by The Cotswold Gallery, London.



HAMPTON COURT PALACE. Engraved by C. Westwood after
J. M. W. TURNER, R.A. To illustrate the use that Turner made
of Angling. From a "touched" proof at The Cotswold Gallery, London.

whereas with a rough handling its presence would not be discernible at all ; that far-off range would be missing."

As "rough handling" is not a rule in the painting of distances, Brett was a dodger in controversy, but in Art always there is a conflict of changing aims that obey the law of action and reaction. And this fact warns us that the steady action of present-day æsthetic beliefs and methods will cause in due course a reaction against themselves, carrying us back to one or other of the, at present, demoded creeds. For this reason, we must be open-minded when we review the land-and-sea painters, the artists who remind us in their work that the British people would be unsafe on shore if they failed to be busy enough also on the sea. Let us remember, too, that those of them who from time to time made use of angling, as of sea-fishing, help us to understand how the action and reaction of artistic enterprise have resulted in the present-day phases of painting. As a rule, the history of schools and styles is akin to the changes through which great painters generally pass in their individual development. That is to say, the great artists, with but few exceptions, have grown from detailed precision through an increasing breadth of vision into loose freedom, and this development, usually, is in part physical, as we have seen, and in part æsthetic and technical. Sir Charles Holmes, commenting on the technical and æsthetic part of this development, has said that artists and educated critics unite in admiring the late or free style, while the public unanimously prefer the earlier. "Both commonly agree on one point—namely, that the period of transition from the early style to the late style is usually marked by a series of achievements which, both to the professional and to the layman, appear masterpieces."¹

The development from detail into freedom is rarely uninterrupted by reaction ; often it resembles a tide's advance to high-water, and it is generally steadier and more rapid in lonely men of genius than in those who are actors in the variable strife of their period. Similarly in school styles, in spite of periodical reactions, the development tends to be from detail and precision on and on, through occasional ebbing of reaction, towards freedom and loose handling. Reaction from these culminating qualities, of course, carries art back towards youth, that is, towards the knowledge that precision in devoted work accumulates.

Our land-and-sea painters, we may be sure, will not be carried by reaction so far back as their eighteenth century forerunners, such as Dominic Serres, R.A., and Samuel Scott, and Charles Brooking ; men who based their

¹ *Burlington Magazine*, October 1908, p. 17.

method on the Dutch semi-marine artists, but who remained far behind their chosen masters ; being followers only, they dallied in the rear inevitably.¹ The recoil will be towards the ideals of style that enable us to pass from W. Clarkson Stanfield, R.A. (1792-1867), back to R. P. Bonington (1801-1828), and to Turner's noontide period, 1805-1815, ranging from "The Shipwreck" (1805), on to those busy days when he lived at Sandycombe Lodge, near Richmond Bridge. At the end of his garden was a square pond into which Turner put the fish that he caught. Sometimes he angled on the Old Brent, with a can to hold trout for this preserve, but the fish disappeared, till at last he discovered that a jack was in his pond. A boy friend, who became the Rev. H. S. Trimmer, went fly-fishing with Turner on the Thames, and Turner gave his catch to his companion, after stringing the fish together through their gills on some long grass. Trimmer, in his account, says that Turner threw a fly in first-rate fashion.

I find it useful, when looking back upon my subject, to employ the Sandycombe days in Turner's life, as travellers used to make use of a half-way resting-place, because, whether he painted from his boat, or travelled with his painting things in a queer gig harnessed to an old crop-eared bay horse, he was searching for colour, and practising an assurance of hand that needed no help from retouching. The colour of fish was to him as wonderful in its own varied way as a sunset, and the practice of fly-fishing helped to increase that union of muscular with nerve strength which has always been essential to manipulative arts. A weak arm has an unsteady hand, in painting as in violin playing. Trimmer says that Turner, during his great sketching trips from Sandycombe Lodge, put everything firmly in its place and never retouched.

Later we shall return to this wondrous magnetic genius, the greatest of England's land-and-sea painters, and invaluable to those of us who wish to

¹ At present I have failed to find anything within my subject by Brooking (1723-1759) and Dominic Serres (1722-1793), who is represented at Hampton Court and at Greenwich Hospital. As for Samuel Scott (died 1772), he is almost as difficult, unlike Sam Owen (c. 1768-1857), who loved angling. Several interesting prints after his work merit a place in a collection of engravings. One of them, dated 1814, represents Staines Bridge, with a fisher and his companion in the left foreground. Another, engraved very well by W. B. Cooke, in 1815, is called "The Willows, seat of the late Townley Ward, Esq."; and Cooke in the same year engraved Owen's picture of Eton Bridge, with an angler well placed. These little prints, in a period study of angling in art, should be looked at side by side with that very pretty *History of the Thames*, in two volumes, which is illustrated in colours after Joseph Farington, R.A. (1747-1821). In the second volume there are two landscapes in which net fishing is introduced, one of Putney, the other of Rochester Bridge and Castle. They recall to memory the fact that salmon fishing was busy in the Thames when Farington and Sam Owen were contemporaries.

learn how a sport can be used in art by a supreme master of imaginative composition. If anglers had encouraged Turner with commissions in those days of early long-suffering which turned him into a nomad topographer, his fondness for angling would have shown itself in his work more often and more variously. Ah, what opportunities have been lost by the well-to-do Waltonians ! The great Houghton Fishing Club, which welcomed Turner, and had among its earliest members the sculptor Chantrey, might easily have formed by now a collection of angling in art which would have attracted a paying public throughout the year !

Still, fine beginnings are never too late. Even the lesser painters who, like William Collins, R.A. (1788-1847), have alternated between seafaring and riversides, would help a wealthy fishing club to form a collection having enough variety.

Collins, as a rule, invites us to linger with him either along the coast, often with children, or in the open country with small girls and boys who belong to the old tradition of Merrie England, a tradition in which Thomas Webster, R.A., lives through a long life (1800-1886). Foreigners like Collins and Webster because these unaffected painters take them with ingenuous pride into the heart of English childhood, with its own sports, pranks, scrapes, school lessons, and what not besides. Like Henry Thompson, R.A. (1773-1843), William Collins painted two pictures of youngsters angling, and prints after them are to be bought. In one, a mezzotint dated 1878, two lads are in a boat by a reed-fringed bank, with trees overhead ; and in the distance, on our right, is a rustic bridge, and beyond it a wood. The second print, dated April 1820, is etched by Collins himself, but mezzotinted by William Ward, A.R.A. And students of my subject should note also a mezzotint after Collins by Charles Turner, A.R.A., "The River Brent," published by H. Leggatt & Co. in 1830.

A versatile contemporary of Collins, Luke Clennell (1781-1840), touched from time to time on angling, as in two illustrations engraved by J. Greig for *The Border Antiquities of England and Scotland*. One print is from a picture of Dilston Tower, Northumberland, and the other represents St. Constantine's Cells. Clennell was a man of mark in his day, and, like Collins and Joshua Cristall (1767-1847), a forerunner of J. C. Hook.¹

J. C. Hook at his best remains an important painter to every one who is

¹ Cristall's "The Fisherboy" and "The Fishmarket on the Beach at Hastings," water-colours, belong to the Victoria and Albert Museum. Like Turner and Girtin, Cristall worked as a boy in Dr. Monro's house. He was one of the Foundation Members of the Water-Colour Society, and three times its President.

moved by British qualities in manly painting. It is true that he loved the physical act of painting *too* much, and that it mastered him pretty often, causing his fine qualities to be carried by over-emphasis into vices ; and we must remember also that he offended the new generations by living from 1819 into the twentieth century (1907) without losing faith in a sunburnt naturalism of his own. What right had he to go on living when confident youngsters, after borrowing ideas from the French, had put him away as dead, forgetting even to call to him their *Ave atque vale* ? If a new generation in the practice of art did not kill and bury its father and grandfather, how could it make room for its own work in the markets ? Hook, then, was assailed as Early Victorian, and he received so many unfair blows that he was comatose in art a good many years before he died as a man. The prices of his best days went soaring up to £1700, a reputation in finance which was easy to discredit. " See what you can get from me for a simple £100 ! " cried the brilliant new generation, whose speculative thoughts hoped that Hook's £1700 for a picture would soon be transferred to its own most brilliant lights. But, after all, the natural sport of art-slaughter produces a reaction, then all that is genuinely good is restored to its own rights. The best of Hook is a pulse of open-air genius which will continue to beat in the great history of British painting. A leading French critic, Robert de la Sizeranne, writing of Hook in 1895, said : " Sa facture un peu pénible, et sa couleur parfois criarde, le distinguent des Français, mais rien dans ses sujets ni dans sa composition n'est britannique . . . Quelques-unes de ses scènes de marine rappellent notre Feyen-Perrin " (*La Peinture Anglaises Contemporaine*, p. 322). A part of this criticism is true. Hook is among certain modern realists who, like Jean François Millet and Bastien-Lepage, have been attracted by Greek sculpture, and the greatest masters of Italy ; and when different ideals meet and clash in the practice of painting, troubles are inevitable. Hook, thinking of Venetian colour, tries very hard, with very different methods of work, when painting in the open air, to attain the grey brilliance that delights him out of doors within the glow of sunlight. In his constant search after rich colour he is apt to overdo the sunburn on seafaring men, and the fat rosininess of health in the cheeks of country children. But, probably, these faults will be toned by time and chemical changes in the paint. Another quality, his passion for linear drawing in paint, which has its original source in his passion for Greek sculpture, becomes more apparent after his sixtieth year, or thereabouts. This fact, a stiffening in the use of paint, is uncommon in the later work of



A WILY ANGLER WATCHING HIS RED FLOAT. *From an Oil*
Painting by J. C. HOOK R.A. (1819-1907). The Pendeli Ralli Collection.

notable artists. And another point is interesting. Hook's earliest subject pictures bring us in touch with a "Pamphilus relating his Story" (1844), a "Bassanio commenting on the Caskets" (1847), a "Rescue of the Brides of Venice" (1851), and other studio pieces.

Considered as a man, Hook was one of humanity's masterpieces, who really ought to have lived as long as Hilpa and Shalum in Addison, just to represent one type of Nature's perfection as a maker of handsome men.

It was my happy lot to have one talk with this ideal Englishman, and I understood at once why Millais painted him with a noble affection. To love Hook is as easy as to love Izaak Walton, and once I tried to write an imaginary conversation between these very typical, but different Englishmen. It seemed to begin pretty well, but Hook became so downright, so Johnsonian, that Walton struggled in vain to speak once more as Piscator. Hook had so many hobbies besides angling. He ploughed, he sowed, he reaped with a sickle, or mowed a field of hay with a scythe; he could have defeated Gladstone as a woodcutter; his gardening was excellent; his handling of boats at sea delighted sailors, and he dared to believe that even seamen should swim like fish. Thoroughly Conservative in all of his dislikes and likes, he enjoyed a little reaction by being an advanced Radical in politics, and by teaching the Surrey villagers to vote as he voted, and to cheer when he read aloud from Shakespeare, and from other immortal non-politicians. As long as our country continues to breed individual men, Hooks and Waltons, and not merely a male population, she may continue to triumph over her habitual ineptitude in foresight.

With a little prompt encouragement from well-to-do anglers Hook would have painted many a picture of freshwater fishing, like his "Wily Angler" in 1883, or his "The Salmon Pool" (1886), or his picture of "Tickling Trout," exhibited at the R.A. in 1887. Thanks to Mr. Pandeli Ralli, who has a fine collection of pictures, I am able to give in colour a typical Hook, very sunburnt, and vigorously sympathetic, and showing that half-humorous fondness for children which comes into his art from his thorough manliness of character.¹

It is always interesting to recall how artists were received by their contemporary judges. Let me choose an example from a leading critic of Hook's best days, G. T. Robinson, who wrote from London to *The Manchester Courier*. Under the dates May 5th and June 12th, 1873, he said:

¹ The picture being large, and the reproduction small, Hook's qualities are inevitably weakened by the blockmakers.

"A couple of excellent Hooks flank this work [a bad picture by P. F. Poole, R.A.]. We shall refer to them again when considering this master's work, which this year is better than ever. . . . Akin to these [works by Henry Moore], but blending land and sea, come the joyous works of Mr. Hook. Here we have brilliant colour combined with the subtlest skill in composition, and over all the purest atmospheric painting. Very full of thought is all Mr. Hook's work. Let us note how well he unites the long line of breakers rushing out to the sea with the foreground, by means of the dark dress of the figure, and the boat of 'The Fishing Haven'; how he preserves the sweep of the bay by means of the arrangement of the lines of the girl and the little child, who brighten up and give a happy human intent to his work. Note, too, the skill by which in 'The Bonxie' he keeps the source of light just out of his picture. We recognize in each and all of these refinements a quality exceeding rare in these days of haste and hurry. Unpleasant as is the subject of his 'Fishing by Proxy,' where cormorants disgorge the prey they are prevented from enjoying, the glory of that green moist valley with its reed and willow-fringed stream compensates for it, making us long for the return of those days when Mr. Hook painted pure landscape, and before he was seduced by fishermaidens or led out to sea by fishermen. . . ." ¹

In the same article G. T. Robinson wrote warmly of another land-and-sea painter, Colin Hunter, whose pictures were called "Trawlers waiting for Darkness," "The Three Fishers," and "After the Gale." Twenty-two years later, in 1895, Colin Hunter exhibited at the Royal Academy his "Salmon-Fishing on the Dee, Kirkcudbright: The Shoulder Net," differing greatly from the composition in which Alphonse Legros composed a somewhat similar kind of fishing with a handled net. Hunter's work was reproduced among the pictures of its year, and I must place it without fear in the history of my subject, but without regarding it as angling. It represents a Scottish way of freshwater-fishing, with a waterfall behind, and a man with his long-handled net. ²

Thanks to Mr. A. S. Hartrick, I am able to give some information about Colin Hunter's fishing with a shoulder-net on the Dee. Mr. Hartrick remembers going with Hunter to see the fishing done, one evening before the painter started the subject, and he saw the picture when finished.

In 1895 this shoulder-net fishing was done on the Dee in only one pool.

¹ This picture, "Fishing by Proxy," was chosen to represent Hook at the Sports and Arts Exhibition of 1890-1891, Grosvenor Gallery, London.

² Even Sir Walter Scott was attracted by ways of fishing which are too "wholesale" for sport. Andrew Lang said of him, for instance, that Sir Walter, who was fond of trout-fishing, was seduced from the legitimate sport of salmon-fishing by salmon-spearing by torchlight.

The implement resembled a large shrimp net fastened to a pole about 20 ft. long, which was thrown by a strong man, almost like a spear, to the far side of the pool; only the man did not loose hold of the pole's butt-end. When the net had sunk he scraped it along the bottom by drawing it towards himself, and while resting the pole upon, and over his shoulder. As the bag of the net came nearer and nearer, the pole passed higher and higher over his shoulder. The pool, so fished, was about 18 or 20 ft. square, not more.

In the same year Mr. Hartrick himself made a drawing—it was published in *The Graphic*—that represented another way of salmon fishing on the Dee, with a man seated on a platform, and a great shrimp net fixed between the posts of his platform, fixed movably, so that he could pull the pole up and down when he felt fish in the bag of his net.

Mr. Hartrick thinks that Colin Hunter did a picture of salmon fishing on the Findhorn, or some river in the north near Dingwall. Of course Hunter did many sea fishings, like "Trawlers waiting for Dark," "The Herring Market at Sea," and many others.¹

From this introduction to the land-and-sea painters, let us turn now to Norman Wilkinson, who at present is doing more than any other painter for angling in art. This year his large seascape at the R.A. made a hit, and in the spring, though greatly troubled by bad weather, he was very busy in Scotland, adding to his outdoor studies about twenty-five good angling sketches in water-colour. Among other work he has made a dry-point etching for the Large Paper Edition of this book, and painted some of the most renowned trout and salmon pools on the Rivers Tay, Garry, Brora, Orchy, Dee, Lyon, and Kingie.

III

After 1901, when he took up marine painting, he travelled much at sea, sketching; and as soon as he could, he bought a boat. In 1912 he was hung on the line at the R.A., and won a very important success with a picture called "National Insurance," representing battleships and attendant destroyers. For the principal shipping companies Norman Wilkinson has designed a large number of posters; he believes, like Frank Brangwyn,

¹ The painting of shoulder-net fishing was seen again at Christie's early in May 1923, among the drawings and pictures from the collection of Sir John H. N. Graham, Bart., of Larbert House, Larbert, Stirlingshire. The picture measures 39½ in. by 27½ in., and its fresh colour remains unchanged. I wished to reproduce it, but failed to get permission.

that too much attention cannot be given by artists to design in its relation to advertisements. From boyhood he has been an ardent fly-fisher, and for many years he has visited Scotland to practise his favourite sport, but it was not till 1920 that he began as a painter to emulate his dead friend, Ernest Briggs. Since then he has painted many water-colours of salmon and trout rivers, and has achieved success with a series of dry-points.

His water-colours have an affinity of sentiment, but not of colour, with those by Briggs ; they are completely English in method and feeling, though painted in Scotland. The colour of both painters is certainly Scottish, but differently so, and the varying effects of Scotland's landscapes on artists are among the few historic wonders of art which have not yet received much attention from professed students of colour. Scottish painters, and English painters who have worked much in Scotland, have a kindred variety of special colour which has a nationalism as definite as that of the tartans ; and we need an explanation of the fact that mountainous landscapes in Wales, with a wondrous diversity of colour that is Welsh, have not affected the art of painting with a formative influence as lasting as Scottish landscapes have had, and still have.

At present Norman Wilkinson has worked in water-colour on Scottish angling subjects, but when he begins to employ his oil-colours, and his big brushes, the Scottish colour that he loves will come by its own in his work with a richer and freer downrightness.

In water-colour his angling in art represents already a good many riversides of Scotland. Thus, in 1921, he had an exhibition in the Dunthorne Gallery, Vigo Street, London, comprising thirty-five water-colours, also nine dry-points ; and many more have been done since then. It was a notable one-man show, and very successful ; no fewer than thirteen of the water-colours were sold. Even their titles are as angling pictures : The Valley of the Awe ; The Bridge Pool at Craigellachie ; Black Duncan, River Orchy ; Lennox Water on the Spey ; A Twenty-five Pounder, Garry ; Grilse Pool on the Spey ; Salmon Leap, Falls of Struan ; The Birk's Pool on the Spey ; Fishing the Intake, Spey ; and The Birk's Pool, Gordon Castle Water.

I am revising this on September 1st, and my present knowledge of the salmon and trout pools in Norman Wilkinson's art is as follows :—

On the Spey.—Tunnel Pool, Lennox Water, Birk's Pool, Bulwark Pool, and Otter Pool ; two pictures of the Alt Deargh Pool, one of them from the top of Lennox Water ; Lord March's Pool, the Greenbank and Intake



FLY-FISHING: THE INTAKE POOL, RIVER SPEY.
From a Water-Colour by NORMAN WILKINSON, O.B.E., R.I.



FLY-FISHING: THE DISPUTED POOL, RIVER AWE.
From a Water-Colour by NORMAN WILKINSON, O.B.E., R.I.

Pool, Fishing the Intake, and two of the Grilse Pool. "The Spey at Craigellachie" is another good drawing, like "The Banks of the Spey."

On the River Orchy, which the Dalmally ghillies regard as much superior to the Awe: it has a very pretty series of attractive little salmon resorts:—Box Pool, Elbow Pool, and Shepherd's Pool.

On the Awe.—Bherie Pool, Bothy Pool, Disputed Pool, Casandhu Pool; and to these let me add, "Trolling for Salmon on Loch Awe," and "The Valley of the Awe," both good.

On the River Garry (Inverness-shire).—"The Home Beat," "The Garry at Tomdown," "Below Loch Poulary," three of the Kettle Pool at Struan, "The Salmon Lie on the Garry," "Above the Horseshoe Pool."

The River Tay.—"Netting Salmon at Stobhall," "Lower Stanley Pool," "The Tay at Ballinluig," "Bridge Pool in Murthly Water," "Haarling on Benchill Water," another of Benchill Water, "Below Stobhall," "Cat Holes, Stanly Water," and "Boat Angling on Campsie Lynn."

The Tummel.—"The Soldier's Leap."

The River Brora.—"The Rock Pool," "Cliff Pool," "The Otter Pool," and "MacCorquodale's Pool."

The River Kingie (Inverness-shire), a tributary of the Garry.—Several water-colours.

The River Lyon.—"At Fortingall," and "Below the Fall at Fortingall."

The Dee.—A few sketches.

Some of the dry-points set us thinking of these water-colours, for they represent Kettle Pool, and Bothy Pool, the Intake Pool, and the Shepherd's Pool, where a fly-fisher, well placed in the semi-middle distance, to the right of centre, stands deep in the Orchy, facing left, and holding his long rod in a beautiful curve. But the light in this etching has been questioned by a noted expert, who wonders whether it is a light favourable to sport.

"Incidentally," he adds, "we notice the presence of a gaff. We wonder whether it is intended for the wounding of the beautiful forms of spring salmon. We hope not, but the fisher is apparently unattended, and it is given to not all of us to hold the view that fresh-run spring fish should either be netted or tailed to preserve their beauty intact." The critic continues: "In 'Spring Fishing on the Spey,' we have, for the keen fisherman, the best of the set. It is a picture to hang in one's study and to live with. It represents the greatest experience of the year. A fish has just taken, and the rod is bending to its weight. . . ."

It is easy to agree with the last lines of this quotation, for "Spring

Fishing on the Spey " is handled with a delicate virility ; it is a brave and good adventure in a very difficult and subtle art, the treatment of abundant running water, and a spacious landscape of hills, drawn with a needle on a copper plate. To go wrong in this elusive craft is almost as easy as to lose at Monte Carlo. The angler, I think, if he were placed one-sixteenth of an inch more to our left, and a wee bit lower down, say one-eighth of an inch, would make the composition ampler ; but it is wonderfully difficult to place a fisherman in a composition when he stands alone in water, and therefore isolated. These matters of art, when we are looking at works of art, need more attention from a painter-angler than do the points raised by the critic against " The Shepherd's Pool on the Orchy." For a painter who is also a good fly-fisher, like Norman Wilkinson, knows two crafts, and experience has taught him that art is more difficult by far than angling. The gaff is vaguely suggested, not because fresh-run spring fish should be gaffed, not netted or tailed, but because it modifies the upright lines of the angler's distant figure, and helps to keep the figure in its place, unobtrusive and yet effective. A net would be more conspicuous.

As for the question of light and angling, to which the critic refers, I find that experts disagree. In " The Shepherd's Pool," for instance, Norman Wilkinson's light beats down upon quiet water forming a rhythmic patterning of broad grey-white and gently rippling shade. This brilliance, the critic suggests, is unfavourable to sport, whereas another expert, Edward Hamilton, who lived from 1815 to 1903, and who appeals to us still as a very notable authority, says on p. 40 of his *Recollections of Fly-Fishing* :

" When the water is very bright and clear in the pools many a fish may be hooked and landed by allowing the fly to sink as deep as you can, and then slowly sink and draw, never bringing the fly near the surface. You see a movement in the water—a swirl and a twist, and your line tightens. You might fish all day in such times, with the fly near the surface, and never move a fish."

There are two Wilkinson dry-points of leaping salmon. We have considered one in the Prefatory chapter (pp. 11-12) ; the other is " The Lorne Pool on the Dee." It has no distance, only a narrow fringe of far bankside splashed with sunlight on our right hand. Sunlight streams also upon the river, but there is a ruffled backwater on our extreme left, and enough moving shadow elsewhere to indicate a brisk current with a strong bite or pull in it. As for the salmon, he seems to be a thirty-pounder, and, leaping

into the sunlight, he is a silvery curve on one deep side and a curving shadow across the back. Ordinary anglers prefer this dry-point to the other one of a leaping salmon, "A Spey Salmon Pool," because, they say, its water has a strong current, into the surface of which a fly can be cast at a correct angle from a favourable position; but as a fisherman is not present, Mr. Wilkinson's work here is to be judged from another standpoint, as an adventure in dry-point impressionism, an art almost free from half-tones.

IV

His angling experiences have helped me much. He is fascinated by salmon, and he has seen how a salmon makes its way up a waterfall. In early times—and they lasted even into the nineteenth century—it was believed that a salmon made its leap by putting its tail into its mouth before making the upward spring. Walton believed this myth, and in 1822 Captain Williamson repeated it in his *Angler's Vade-Mecum* :

"The manner in which the salmon leaps is singular. It descends deep into the water, and turning its head towards the fall, makes upwards with all its force; but as it reaches the surface brings its tail up to its mouth, and using it as a spring, casts itself towards the height to be surmounted. I have frequently seen them in this manner ascend about ten or eleven feet, but I have read of their leaping much higher."

According to Edward Hamilton, it is doubtful whether a salmon can surmount at one leap any fall above nine feet, more likely under eight. He adds :

"That they get over higher falls it is true, but often, without it being noticed, there is a ledge of rock within the white spray, which gives the fish a moment's rest, and then he is up the two or three feet [more] in an instant. . . . The leap is effected by the powerful muscles attached to the tail, by which at the moment of leaving the water the fish is sent with great force onwards and upwards."

Nature really seems to have made the salmon in order to occupy the leisure of fishermen with myths and mysteries. As I am fascinated by the courage and strength of a fish that leaps through the weight of down-coming water, I have begged Mr. Wilkinson to write out his ocular evidence. He has done so, and I have his leave to publish his account here. He tells his good story from its beginning, as follows :—

V

A Salmon Pool

"There is a pool on the River Garry at Struan called The Kettle Pool, and it is one of the most interesting places I have yet seen for the study of that most mysterious of all fish, the Salmon. It is a deep pool set in beautiful surroundings, with steep rocky sides, and surrounded by birch, larch, and other vegetation. The pool itself is small in area, at a rough guess some fifteen yards wide by twenty long, and it is fed by a small but beautiful fall.

"Immediately below are two smaller pools. On the two occasions on which I visited it the Kettle and its two companions were alive with salmon.

"The Kettle itself is very deep at the fall end, but shallows suddenly at the tail, where it is only two or three yards across; and here at certain times of the day I have seen fifteen or twenty fish lying almost motionless. At intervals a fish would leave his fellows, and would disappear into the blackness of the pool, his place being taken by another, which would suddenly appear and swing into place with that grace and power so suggestive of the strength of this wondrous fish.

"At other times all the fish would leave the tail and dash about the pool, some flinging themselves out of the water as if madness had come to them.

"I have heard it stated by fishermen that a salmon always leaps with his head upstream. In fact a correspondence took place in *Country Life* round an etching of mine which appeared in that journal. At Struan I saw this clearly disproved a number of times. One fish in particular threw himself out of the pool with a tremendous leap downstream, and landed in a small dry pothole several feet up the rocky side, and here remained for several seconds just balanced on the edge, apparently stunned; then with a flip or two he slithered down into the pool.

"Towards evening there appeared to be a concerted plan on the part of the fish to try to get up the fall. This was a most interesting operation. I could lie on a flat rock within a foot or two of the fall itself, to watch the desperate efforts of the salmon to reach the pool above. Two or three fish would appear in the air together, generally to fall back into the cauldron below, where heads and tails could be seen showing black against the tumbling foam. One fish of about twenty pounds made the attempt as I watched, and was one of the few that actually succeeded in reaching the pool above. It was a great performance, demonstrating the amazing power of the salmon. He leaped into the thickest part of the fall, and seemed to wriggle his way up what appeared to be nothing but foam, his body and tail vibrating at tremendous speed, till at last he gained the more solid water. Here he fell over the rocky edge, disappearing at a great pace and gaining the upper



SPRING FISHING ON THE SPEY. *From the Dry-*
point by NORMAN WILKINSON, O.B.E., R.O.I., R.I.

pool. I was within three feet of him as he passed, and it seemed to me a most wonderful exhibition of power and determination.

"We fished these three pools, and a most entertaining affair it proved. There was little casting to be done. It was enough to drop the fly on a short line into the foot of the fall, allowing it to work out into the slightly less disturbed water, where the fish were numerous, though we could see them only when they rose above the broken surface. It was in this pool that we proved to our own satisfaction what has often been said—that a salmon can be worried into taking a fly. On several occasions we actually fished in vain for two and three hours without moving. Then a salmon—which must have seen the fly a hundred times—would rise and take it. Usually, when hooked, the fish would 'sound' like a whale to the deepest part of the pool right under the fall. The actual gaffing had to be done in the pool below owing to the rocky sides of the Kettle. This was a ticklish business as it meant coaxing him over a small fall to the only possible spot for landing.

"One of our party was so disgusted at the refusal of all the fish to look at his fly, that he decided to try a prawn. From the high banks above we watched the experiment, and shouted advice and instructions. His object was to allow the prawn to work its way down to the fish lying at the tail, every one of which we could see from our vantage point. The result was very amusing. As soon as the prawn came within a foot or so of the fish they gently backed away before it, not one showing the least inclination to take, and after one or two enticing jerks by the holder of the rod, they began one by one to disappear slowly into the depths of the pool till not a fish remained.

"One of the memorable things witnessed in this place—it would have delighted a naturalist—was the passage of a goosander and her chicks down the river. They came suddenly floating down the pool above the Kettle, and to my astonishment one and all disappeared over the fall into the thickest of the foam, only to bob up like corks farther down. Continuing their way on the stream to the lower pool, they finally passed directly over a number of salmon that lay packed like sardines at the tail of the last pool. The salmon dashed in every direction, and flung themselves out of the water, whilst Mrs. G. and her youngsters went on serenely."



CHAPTER III

FROM JOHN S. SARGENT, R.A., TO JOHN LEECH

I

IT was in 1864 that Leech died, prematurely, at the age of forty-six. Fifty-nine years part us from his genial review of daily life, social, political, and sporting; and this little span of time, in all that concerns the international strife of politics, has been even more portentous than that which separated the rise of Washington from the fall of Napoleon. Art, too, when we look back upon her workers, is alive with wayward unrest, an impatient maker of too many bubble sects that regard fame not as an ideal towards which they must grow up, but as a sort of Derby race for the sprinting innovation of early youth. Through these fifty-nine years, in fact, humanity's own Peter Pan has been uncommonly alert and wideawake, trying once more to prove that new generations have nothing to learn from the drama of life in past centuries.

If Leech could visit London again for a few busy months, what would he feel, and think, and say? He would find that *Punch* remains the great weekly of his own day, while showing different costumes, and a society with new tricks of speech and manner. In all essentials the carnival of life would be the same life in a carnival altered by tailors, milliners, dressmakers, and by some new mechanical inventions, such as airplanes and motor-cars.

One thing Leech would see very clearly as he looked across these fifty-nine years: that artists, with all their variety of "isms," have remained in essentials like their forerunners, some rebelling against life and tradition, others accepting the authority of these rulers.

In the National Gallery Leech would find an excellent new example of natural originality grown into a new art from a lineage of old tradition. He would see the Sargents hanging among the Old Masters, and revealing their descent from great forerunners, notably Velazquez, and also that all-important atmosphere of varying social position that Sir Anthony Van Dyck keeps through the generations around and upon his portraits.



A STUDY OF SALMON IN NORWAY. *Painted about twenty years ago by J. S. SARGENT, R.A. Size 27½ in. x 21½ in.. Reproduced by permission of Alec McCulloch, Esq.*

Certain swift and "touchy" qualities in Gainsborough seem to have been noted early by Sargent, and remembered; and hints were chosen from those innovating impressionists, worshippers of sunlight, who were busy in France when Sargent, in 1876, at the age of twenty, went from Florence to Paris, and placed himself under Carolus Duran, a sympathetic and brilliant man who knew how to teach, how to bring out into hope and courage the gifts of students who liked and trusted him. Sargent progressed with wonderful rapidity. A year later he painted a good portrait of his master; in 1879 he went to Spain, and at Madrid he fathomed the wisdom of painted life to which Velazquez had given such a noble simplicity and manliness.

Soon afterwards, at the beginning of the "eighties," a series of pictures—"En route pour La Pêche," "Smoke of Ambergris," the amazing "El Jaleo," and a memorable portrait of Madame Gautreau—launched the young painter into the full tide of æsthetic approbation and noisy opposition. Suppose some one had predicted then that forty-one years later, while he remained eagerly at work, examples of Sargent's art would hang unopposed as classics in our National Gallery. This forecast would have been ridiculed as fantastic, so fretful were the sectarian phases of criticism that fought around his canvases, a comedy of schools ruffled by excessive zeal.

Though I have seen and loved a vast amount of this great painter's achievements, I have never had a chance of studying the "En route pour La Pêche," but it appeared in 1881. About twenty-two years later, during a holiday in Norway, with his friend the late Mr. George McCulloch, the famous collector, he painted the three angling pictures which I have the privilege of reproducing. It was a beautiful vivid summer, so dry that some half-smoked cigarettes, hastily thrown away when they were still burning, set fire to tall dried grasses, causing a fire that travelled towards a small farm, and the holiday-makers had much trouble in helping to put it out with water carried in buckets, and in some other things that looked ridiculously too small for the purpose. The farm was rescued; and let no one ask who seems to have been most diligent as a lighter of cigarettes.

One day during a walk they came upon a shed where some salmon were hung up in the open air—a fine impression of colour—and in about an hour Mr. Sargent sketched the impression, producing a work over which anglers have disagreed. Some have asked why the painter omitted scales from the surface of the bodies; while others have asked, "Is the largest fish a rainbow trout?" The sketch being a study of colour, brushed off at a white

heat, it represents no more than its painter desired to suggest. A reproduction is only a small memento of its original ; but those light, swift, zig-zag touches give quite enough texture for an impression. A considerable distance of atmosphere separated the sketcher from the still-life ; and fine colour as a mass, not fish as a study in natural history, caused the sketcher to set up his easel. Once upon a time a great poet was asked what meaning he had hidden away in a song. He answered that his only aim was to express the pleasure of bathing in pure water out of doors. This, too, is impressionism—an art directed from the inward to the outward world, from ourselves and our emotions to visible things, that are worth experiencing from a great many different standpoints, and under changing conditions.

“ All eras in a state of decline and dissolution are subjective ; on the other hand, all progressive eras have an objective tendency. . . . We see this not merely in poetry, but also in painting, and much besides.”¹

From the first Sargent has set his mind against subjectivity, has refused to be a slave to himself ; and for this reason his art in all of her phases has conquered provinces for herself from the visible world. There is rarely a parade of power and purpose such as we get from Mr. Augustus John : there's no need for parade, for the power is a long-distance runner, not a sprinter ; and as for the purpose, it grows into pictures from things and persons not only understood, but also, if the word may be used here, alembicated. Some Sargent portraits are almost frightening in their grasp of character, while others are like flowers in a conservatory, at once natural and yet artificial ; flowers that would die if they had to brave out of doors such a contest for life as the seasons impose on bluebells and cowslips and daffodils. It is this varied objectivity, so different from much of the art which is now in vogue, that has enabled Sargent's genius to invade the National Gallery as a right won by fair conquest.

Anglers, then, should be proud that we have received from this master the most important angling portrait which has yet been produced by any painter who has set up his home in England. This picture, like the study of salmon, was painted in Norway. Its canvas measures 53½ in. by 95½ in. Mr. Sargent's first intention was to paint an upright portrait, as in the sketch of the boy salmon-fisher that I am able to reproduce ; but the background of tumbled water did not come right. So a new picture was begun, with the canvas turned sideways upon the easel, and the boy lying on the

¹ Goethe in his conversations with Eckermann.



PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG SALMON-FISHER, ALEC McCULLOCH.
Painted in Norway, about 1903, by JOHN S. SARGENT, R.A.
Size, 53½ x 95½ inches. Reproduced by permission of Mrs. Coultis Michie, C.B.E.

bankside, his brown landing-net between his knees, his gaff in his right hand, rocks behind him, and a charming creek, from which the river came flowing in a swirl. Close by, on the boy's left, lay a catch of salmon with a leafed branch plucked from a bush. Since this masterpiece was painted, the sitter has grown to a man of thirty-five, but he remembers every detail of that holiday in Norway.

In one of his rooms, hanging in a row, I have seen three Sargent sketches : the salmon, the small upright portrait of Mr. Alec McCulloch, and another sketched portrait ; one of his father, resting fatigued among pillows after a walk, with that wistful and endearing patience which comes to good men, who, after much activity, know that they have but a few months more to live. This sketch is an offering of perfect friendship, a great poem ; and I like to think of it as a natural contrast to that vigour of youth which the large angling portrait makes real out of doors, in sun-filled light, and mainly in silvery, singing greys, atmospheric tints of blue and green, relieved by the sunburnt freshness of the boy's happy face, and by his shoes and net, the colour of which is a worn chestnut-brown. A full brush is busy everywhere, carrying the same technical inspiration with a rhythm of joyous free life through a happy composition that does not look in the least arranged. Of course, the salmon and the leaves are notes of colour governed by relativity ; that is to say, they do not draw attention from the boy who landed them, but help to complete a design suffused with luminous atmosphere. They are simplified into a minor plot of colour, because the painter viewed them as relatively half-seen in his impression of abundant unity.

Laymen who are not connoisseurs, who have not studied painting, very often feel ill at ease when a modern master invites them in a large picture to accept fish lying on a bankside as notes of colour, not as independent studies for a gallery of illustrated natural history. Their eyes wander at once to the fish, and they examine painted canvas as attentively as anglers do a catch, regardless of all surroundings. Henry James, in an article on Sargent, published in *Harper's Magazine*, October 1887, noted, not without sympathy, this contrast between a layman's narrowed vision of familiar things, and a great painter's synthesis of the same objects.

" If a painter works for other eyes as well as his own," said Henry James, " he courts a certain danger in this direction, that of being arrested by the cry of the spectator : ' Ah, but excuse me, I myself take more impressions than that.' Mr. Sargent simplifies, I think, but he simplifies with style, and his impression in most cases is magnificent. . . ."

Criticism being a free agent, every spectator can speak with candour ; but humility also is a free agent ; and we have a great deal more to learn from a big master than he has to gain from our approval or disapproval.

II

It was in Norway, about twenty years ago, that another painter of enduring note, Charles Furse, A.R.A., produced a fine angling portrait, one of Mr. and Mrs. F. S. Oliver, which made a hit at the Royal Academy in 1904, a few short months before his early death. To the same exhibition he sent some other memorable works : "Diana of the Uplands," an idyll of windblown and sunny beauty, and the portrait of Miss Mabel Terry Lewis in a lilac gown, and the children of Mr. Lycett Green, M.F.H., "Cubbing with the York and Ainsty." No English painter in the year of his death has ever been represented at the Royal Academy by four achievements so promiseful of a new advance.

Furse was only thirty-six when he died of consumption, and shortly afterwards Mr. Sargent wrote about his brave and versatile genius :

"When one realizes the short span of years that was allowed to Charles Furse, one is impressed by the stride with which towards the last he neared some very high aim.

"As a student, he was one of those whose progress is gradual, because of a certain many-sidedness and a variety of faculties, rather than one marked from the first by some special grace of colour or other quality soon to be at its best. His was an abundant endowment, not only artistically, but intellectually, and many elements were to combine in the expression of his talent ; not the least was that keenness and gallantry of nature, which is a cherished memory among his friends, and which spurred him to ambitious themes and ambitious treatment of them. His great critical faculty made him fully conscious of shortcomings, but never for an instant diminished his spirit. He had plenty of indignation, but no thought of discouragement, when he considered himself to have failed, and he would pass on with heightened enthusiasm to a more difficult enterprise. Even the knowledge that an enemy in the shape of disease kept pace with him, seemed only to affect him as a kind of challenge—year by year he surpassed his last achievement and kept his lead. If it were not for the fact that his very last pictures reveal quite new resources and a widening scope, one might consider that he had reached his goal when the race ended. But there is in them a certain promise of romantic beauty and power that makes one wonder whether he would not have achieved the things that are reserved for that talent alone which is matched with a great personality."

To have achieved so much in thirty-six years, in spite of bad health ! And this young modernist, being a man of genius, had no fear of the Old Masters, but gathered from their prolific example what he needed, taking something from Reynolds (to whom he was related through his father), and something in turn from Titian, Tintoretto, Rembrandt, Van Dyck, Velazquez, whom he approached with a gift for criticism that would have made him an excellent writer. " Rembrandt vignettes his lights ; Velazquez silhouettes his masses " : this is one of his brief judgments ; and yet, with this command over criticism, his unsparing candour towards his own big efforts never threw a chill over his eagerness to try again. The bigger the scale the happier he felt, and the better he painted. As soon as he entered a room where friends were gathered, genial controversy began to circulate, and only one thing set his good nature on edge ; any littleness that showed some sort of ill-feeling towards a rival. This being his character, note how it informed his work with manly candour, and generous friendship, and magnanimous youth and hopefulness.

These qualities are still present in his angling portrait, as the reproduction in black and white bears witness. The lady's beauty, and the angler's intent figure, are associated also with another quality, a modelling that suggests a liking for sculpture ; for sculpture when seen out of doors, and in keeping with his environment. A good many painters have shown the same quality, each in his own way, like J. F. Millet and Constantine Meunier.

With this good piece by Furse, and the great example set by Sargent, angling in modernist portraiture has fortune for a friend ; but these portraits are twenty years old. What has been done since then ? How many well-to-do anglers have desired to continue that fine tradition for angling portraiture which goes back through the generations to the pre-Waltonian period ?

The answer to this question, so far as my research has taken me, is un-hopeful. Ralph Peacock has painted a good angling portrait, and I give an example of open-air portraiture in water-pigment by Mr. A. T. Nowell, also one after an oil-painting by J. H. Amschewitz, who signed his canvas in 1907. It is a portrait of the leading historian of dry fly-fishing, the late Frederic M. Halford, a relative of Mr. M. H. Spielmann, whose intimacy with modern art, as critic and as editor, began in the eighteen-eighties.¹ It was Mr. Spielmann who introduced the young artist to Mr. Halford, and by

¹ Under Mr. Spielmann's editorship of *The Magazine of Art*, I served my apprenticeship, and to the present book he has contributed many hints, all useful and very welcome.

good luck the painter and his sitter understood each other; the portrait being very like and sympathetic.

Here and there the handling is immature, but careful observation is present, as in the adept delicacy with which the right hand touches the rod. Though young in style, the picture reminds us that portraiture is a collaboration; any disunity between artists and their sitters producing failure.

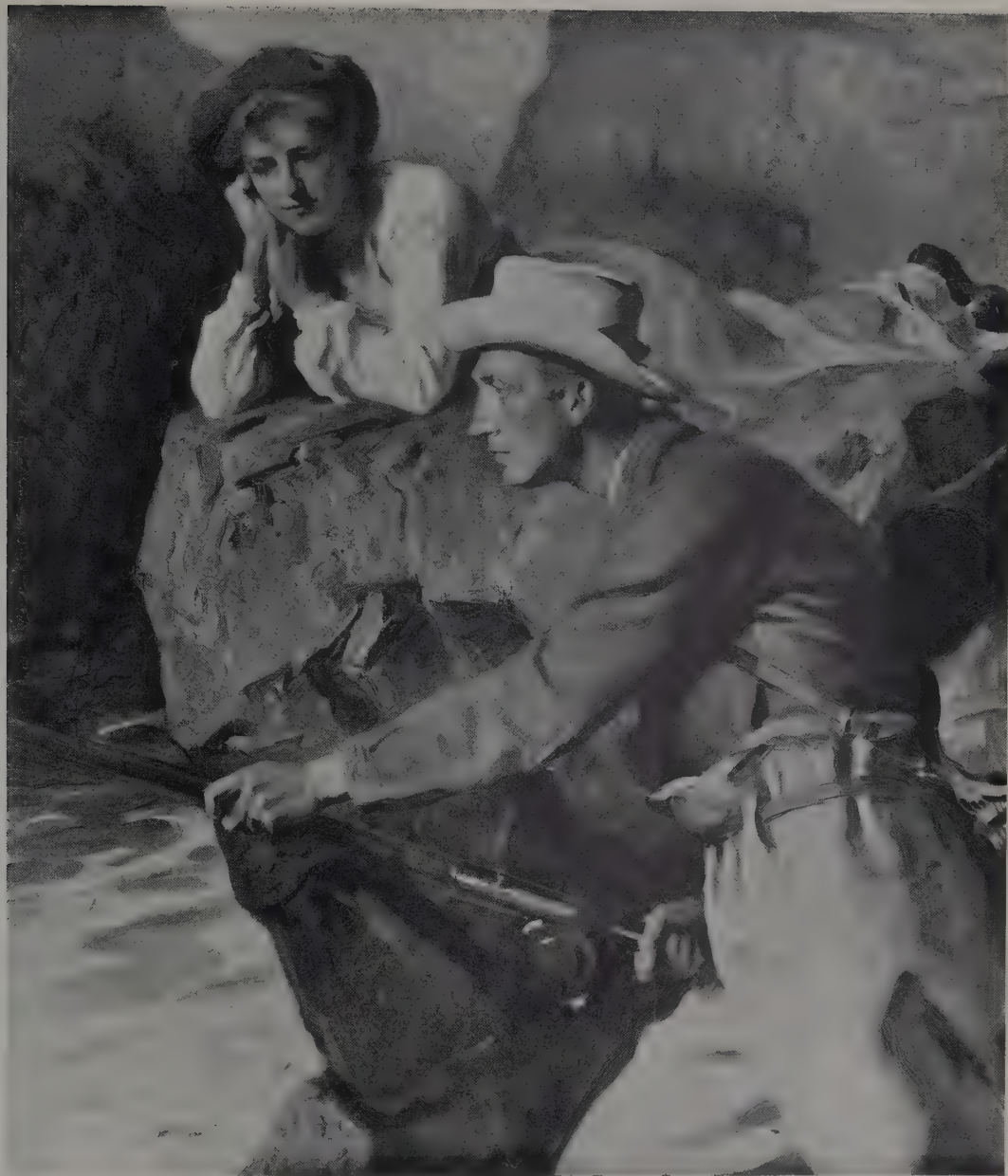
There would be fewer failures than we see year after year in exhibitions if sitters always allowed themselves to be painted in association with their work or with their favourite hobbies and out-door pastimes. Then they would be at ease, and portraiture would be a record of social history as well as a partnership between the differing distinction of each painter's aim and style and the person whom he represents with sympathetic judgment.

Of course, a portrait is not merely a likeness, such as we get from good photography, yet likeness, legally and artistically, is essential to a commissioned portrait. Only we must remember also that certain things in a painter's liking for character become libellous if they break through the reticence of fine art and reveal too much. In our time some very bad mistakes of this kind have been made by portrait-painters, mainly because too many sitters have refused to be represented either busy at their work or at ease with their sports and hobbies.

III

An earlier school of portraiture, homely and rustic, is represented by "Steady, Johnnie, Steady!" an angling picture by Erskine Nicol, R.S.A., A.R.A., who lived from 1825-1904. Nicol was a native of Leith. He received his art training at the Trustees' Academy in Edinburgh—like McTaggart, MacWhirter, Orchardson, Pettie, and J. R. Reid. In 1859 he was elected R.S.A.; and eight years later the R.A. welcomed him as an Associate. Nicol was a good angler, and very fond of Irish and Scottish peasant life, which he viewed often as a humorist. Engravings after his pictures were popular. In 1885 his health failed, and artistic fashions began to place him among the supposed "back numbers." Retiring from the R.A., he set up his home at Feltham, in Middlesex, where he died at the age of seventy-nine.

It is believed that he painted a good many angling pictures, and I should like to know their present whereabouts. Mr. Harry Keevil has a water-



MR. & MRS. F. S. OLIVER. Angling in Norway, about 1902. *A large Oil Painting by CHARLES W. FURSE, A.R.A. (1868-1904). The F. S. Oliver Collection. Reproduced from a photograph lent by Dame Katharine Furse.*



"STEADY, JOHNNIE, STEADY!" From a Painting by **ERSKINE NICOL**, A.R.A. (1825-1904). Printed from a Block lent by Messrs. Hamptons. The picture now belongs to Mrs. Malcolm, The Holt, Harrow Weald. In 1892, a fine engraving by W. H. Simmons was published by L. H. Lefevre.

colour called "A Lively Fly," dated 1853—an Irish angler in a high, soft hat, and a shabby-genteel coat, swallow-tailed, and his waistcoat cut very low to show abundant shirt. It is a rapid sketch, probably a suggestion for an oil-picture. Mrs. Malcolm, to whom "Steady, Johnnie, Steady!" now belongs, has also a Nicol water-colour, "The Patient Angler," an episode of boat-fishing with a man and a boy.

In 1892 Johnnie and his father were engraved very well by W. H. Simmons, for Lefevre, and few prints mark a period more characteristically. Boy and man are so wrapped up in their sporting lesson, and are painted with a rustic feeling so true, that we have here a real fishing picture without any water in its composition. Is this touch of originality unique among angling pictures painted out of doors? I do not remember another waterless picture of active angling.

Compare this Nicol with the Richard Ansdell, which is also portraiture. To some noted anglers the Ansdell has appealed as a master-piece of salmon-fishing. Let me ask why? No doubt it is better than the bulk of Ansdell's work, which is generally too clean and too sweet and too petted. In certain phases of Victorian painting flocks and herds are beautifully neat and beautifully curled: Nature is treated as a boudoir, and the very surface of the paint looks over-polished. But Ansdell had some goodish days; he loved angling, and did his very best when he put it into this picture. Yet, after all, did he succeed?

Note, first of all, that every part of his composition receives an equal amount of prying attention, distant hills having about as much mappy detail as foreground stones, and the creel, and the dog's long hair. One thinks of a bad orchestra in which all instruments have an equal amount of work to do. Besides, does gaffing a beaten salmon need such a display of muscular strength, or such a theatrical attitude? And how is that kilted ghillie to step backward without jolting against the middle-aged angler, who looks so cool, even so apathetic, that only a very poor fight can have come to him from the big fish! Indeed, are you not amused by the contrast between the ghillie's energy and his employer's neatly-polished waders and round-backed composure? A salmon that wriggles gamely when gaffed must have done enough in the water to strain that light rod and the unathletic fisherman. The dog, too, receiving excitement from two men, would be in the water, barking. At present he is quietly sitting for his portrait after a good dinner; there is also a dinner in the creel, and Ansdell hungers over the creel and paints its portrait minutely. Even the rug, lying on ground that ought to

be wet, is trim and pretty. Yet there are anglers, and noted anglers, who say that Ansdell satisfies their technical knowledge and their criticism.

Many years ago I saw this picture, and its engraver had not magnified its faults. Ansdell knew that he had toiled his way to the brink of an over-elaborate failure ; so he tried to put a movement of drama into the ghillie and the beaten fish. For all that, we are lucky to have a work typically characteristic of British art in one very popular Victorian school. Ansdell would have been a much better painter if he had studied Constable, and David Cox, and J. S. Cotman, his pioneer seniors ; but he wanted to be factful, illustrative, pretty, tight and dry ; and one ruling taste was a good friend to him. One thing Ansdell understood very well, that in the long run Englishmen rarely gain much when they try to paint like foreigners. Millais, too, whose " Flowing to the River " is a fine angling piece, believed that British art should be national.

" There is among us," he wrote, " a band of young men, who, though English, persist in painting with a broken French accent, all of them much alike, and seemingly content to lose their identity in their imitation of French masters, whom they are constitutionally, absolutely, and in the nature of things, unable to copy with justice either to themselves or to their models."

In this chapter there are illustrations of two more portrait pieces : a water-colour by J. F. Lewis, R.A. (1805-1876), from Mr. A. N. Gilbey's collection ; and a very notable oil-painting by a Scottish master, Sir George Harvey (1806-1876), who presided over the Royal Scottish Academy from 1864 to the time of his death.

Lewis and Harvey were anglers, and contemporaries almost from their cradle days. Note the remarkable difference between their aims and styles, and also that the year of their death, 1876, leaves the work of each undemoded. Ansdell lived till 1885, when the school of his choice, like old politics, had passed into history, leaving some influences active which few people really liked. In the arrangement of my chapters I am choosing the death-years to get a receding line of artists who inherited varying traditions ; and it is very sad to note how many artists died after the movement of painting had gone away from them.

Lewis was the son of a good engraver, and for a time he wished to follow his father's profession. But he met young Edwin Landseer, a boy three years his senior, and wonderfully gifted ; they became friends, sketched and dissected animals together, and began to paint in the same way, choosing



LANDING A SALMON. From a Proof before all Letters
after RICHARD ANSDELL, R.A. (1816-1885).
Typically a Victorian picture, of the Landseer-Herring School.

animals as their models. When Lewis was twenty-three, and known already as a painter of animals, who worked in oil-colours, he had advanced far enough in water-pigment to be elected an associate of the Water Colour Society. Seven years later, in 1835, he began to enrich his style in Spain and in Italy, painting always from Nature, and striving to gain a mastery over minute definition and detail, a mastery akin to that which he found in Van Eyck, and in some of the great Italians who prepared the way for Raphael, Titian, and Tintoretto. Lewis began this long research out of doors a full twenty years before our English pre-Raphaelites began to study leaves with the aid of a magnifying glass, and to form their principles into a busy school. Lewis, then, was a pathfinder, and Ruskin supported him with ardent encouragement, saying that the young painter's rendering of details looked ineffably right, because it was marvellous not only in quantity of detail, but also in breadth. "It is amazing," said Ruskin, "that there should be so Much, but far more amazing that this Much should be all right." Happily, Lewis was too much of an adventurer to sit down quietly while a fashion in criticism dropped roses of praise all over him. He fell in love with the East, became one of England's Orientalists in Art, remaining once for eight years among the Egyptians. Neither heat nor discomfort made him hurried or careless, and he suffused his carefully orchestrated details with Eastern quaintness and with searching sunlight. At present he is overshadowed by modes and moods of artistic expression that are opposed to his; but he remains such a brave, big fellow that several French critics have said that they would be glad if J. F. Lewis were one of their own Orientalists.

Such, in brief, is the man who painted Edwin Landseer in the act of angling, accompanied by a jolly old net-bearer, and by a terrier. It is a very pleasing water-colour, a record of their early friendship, when they painted and fished together, Lewis ardent yet cool, and Landseer as excitable as he was rapid. Note how he holds his rod—to keep his arm from trembling. The left hand, which through many hours of painting work does nothing more than hold a palette, dangles uselessly; it is the brush-hand that does all of the work in Landseer's last struggle with his catch. And the old keeper looks towards Lewis with a shrewd, half-amused twinkle in his face; he, too, is one of Landseer's friends, like the dog.

Several critics have said that Landseer painted the dog, but there is really no reason to take him away from his rod. Lewis not only put animals into many of his pictures, both early and late work; in some respects he was

a better animal-painter than Landseer, because he never humanized animals, in order to be known as an Æsop of the brush.¹

Passing now to Sir George Harvey, and his broad and strong picture of loch-fishing from a boat, we find ourselves in presence of a "plein air" adventure, not in the least like Constable's pathfinding, and also very different from the methods chosen by Jules Bastien-Lepage (1848-1884). Harvey, born at St. Ninians, near Stirling, began life as a bookseller's apprentice, but at seventeen he changed his mind, and going to Edinburgh he worked for two years in the Academy of the Board of Manufactures, under Sir William Allan. Very energetic and ambitious, he took part at the age of twenty in the formation of the Scottish Academy, becoming a Foundation Associate, and in 1829 a full member. From the start his work was popular; engravings after it circulated freely; for it amused Harvey to pass from pictures of old-time history into popular sports, like curling, bowling, and angling. Never afraid of life and attracted by all human nature, his range could not be narrow; but, like many British painters, he was apt to be careless, choosing his pigments too experimentally, as though he wished to follow a bad example set by Reynolds, Etty, and Turner. Some of his pictures have been injured by bitumen, a luscious and seductive brown which is likely to melt in hot galleries and rooms, and that causes other pigments to crack. To work with bitumen is very pleasant, for it is among colours what absinthe has always been among drinks; so from time to time we come upon it in pictures of a different date. Harvey, I am happy to add, omitted bitumen from his masterpiece of loch-fishing.

It is believed that he made two pictures of the Rev. Dr. Guthrie angling on Loch Lee, accompanied by a boy, Patrick Guthrie, and by a pretty girl, who became Mrs. Annie Williamson, of Copley, Cheshire, and of Glenogil, Forfarshire. Mrs. Williamson died recently, aged over eighty; and Mr. Patrick Guthrie is still alive and well at the age of eighty-seven. Angling and longevity have gone together, century after century.²

¹ Another Lewis, F. C. Lewis (1779-1856), who studied engraving under Stadler, designed and mezzotinted a good little angling piece, "On the River Dart," 1825; its fisherman is in the foreground. De Wint's work has in it a water-colour, "On the River Dart," with an angler in the middle distance, a very small figure.

² Some of the early examples certainly seem too good to be quite true. Mr. H. T. Sheringham has drawn my attention to several who dared to vie against Old Parr as a collector of too many scores of years, while remaining anglers almost to the last. Turn, for instance, to Robert Plot's *Natural History of Staffordshire*, 1686, and on page 326 you will read of an English angler, from Dent in Craven, who, when travelling bravely into his second century, appeared as a witness at the York Assizes, 1664, and had skill enough in his antique fingers to "make fish hooks as small



THE REV. DR. GUTHRIE ANGLING ON LOCH LEE.
From an Oil Painting by SIR GEORGE HARVEY, P.R.S.A. (1806-1876). By permission of J. Maule Guthrie, Esq., M.P. The boat is rowed by Mr. Maule Guthrie's uncle, Patrick Guthrie, who to-day is in his 87th year. The lady in the boat became Mrs. Annie Williamson, of Copley, in Cheshire, and Glenogil, Forfarshire. She died recently at the age of eighty.

The picture represents the north end of Loch Lee at the top of Glenesk. That square crag towards our right is Craigneskeldie, and that hollow behind the point of the rod is a fold in the hills called Carlochy. Dr. Guthrie, a quaint and intent sportsman, has played his fish into defeat. At present I have seen this picture only in photography, but a lover of art who sees it frequently, the Rev. W. J. Street, of Brechin, has sent me some notes on the scheme of colour.

Night has almost fallen, but a reflected light from the sky, just after sunset, rests here and there on gloomy hills, on deep sombre water, and the boy's light-grey suit, and the girl's pink dress and white sun-hat. Doctor Guthrie himself wears a black felt hat, dark grey trousers, and a coat seemingly of brown velveteen, square-cut, and much worn. Indeed, his clothes are old, and also full of character, fit to be drenched with sudden rain, unlike the girl's attire. This angler, we see, stood habitually with the left knee bent, and proved by his dead-earnestness that clerics of the nineteenth century could rival the sixteenth-century angling of Alexander Nowel, Dean of St. Paul's.

IV

And now a few words must be said about two phases more of portraiture.

There is a good deal of portraiture in occasional pictures that represent anglers in a room, sometimes talking of the wonderful fish which they have failed to land, and sometimes waiting for daybreak to come. I have noted very little of these phases among paintings of the modernist period. J. A. Lomax composed in oil-colours "The Angler's Story,"¹ choosing costumes of about 1789, and putting into it some quiet fun; but it recalls to mind a more amusing inspiration—four delightful verses that cannot be quoted too many times :

as would take a trout with a single hair. Which yet," continues Plot, "is not so much as is told by Buchanan [*Rerum Scotio Hist.* Lib. I.] of a certain Scotchman . . . who at sevenscore years of age was able to go out a-fishing in tempestuous weather in his own little boat, tho' he wanted not much of Jacob himself who was 147." Then there is a still more wonderful angler, Henry Jenkins, born in 1500 at Ellerton-on-Swale, Yorkshire, who lived to the miraculous age of 169. He died at last a pauper in his native village, and was buried in Bolton-on-Swale churchyard, December 9th, 1670. In 1743, a monument to his memory was erected by contribution. Nine years later T. Worlidge etched a portrait of this angling patriarch from an original painting by Robert Walker, of Cromwell's time. On December 21st, 1907, *The Fishing Gazette* gave an interesting account of Jenkins.

¹ This picture belongs to Mr. Harry Keevil, of Coley Park, Reading.

" Upon the river's bank serene
A fisher stood while all was green,
And looked it.

" He saw, just as the light grew dim,
The fish—or else the fish saw him—
And hooked it.

" He took with high-erected comb
The fish—or else the story—home,
And cooked it.

" Recording angels by his bed
Weighed all that he had done or said,
And booked it."

A painter cannot hold his own against these verses. So I pass on to an illustrative form of angling portraiture that photography and half-tone blocks have put out of vogue. It may be revived, for the public is becoming bored by prints of popular life and sport reproduced from work done by our camera spies and persecutors. In a few years every one of our illustrated papers may be obliged to hark back to that sovereign tradition of original art, week by week, which *Punch* has retained unflinchingly. For some time there have been signs of this revival. One of them is the popularity of humorous drawings in the newspaper press. Let us hope that this good thing will not be "stunted" into a routine bore. Next, we have the familiar work of Frank Reynolds, W. Heath Robinson, D. M. Payne, Fred Buchanan, and G. D. Armour, Graham Simmons, Gilbert Wilkinson, Leo Cheney, Tony Castle, Alick P. F. Ritchie, Cecil Aldin, H. M. Bateman, G. E. Studdy; and then there are many varied and able sporting sketches by Lionel Edwards, who is a student of angling as well as of hunting.

I have examined a good many collections of sporting prints that were made when our illustrated papers employed specialist artists to keep the public in touch with sports. Four of them were large volumes of angling prints, often rather boring, like most old journalism, but better by far, as a rule, than blocks from photographs. Mr. Sheringham picked up one of these scrap books for a few shillings; it covers some thirty years of graphic journalism, but, unfortunately, dates of publication are omitted, so are names of papers; a pretty example of English compromise! Every print is neatly trimmed and carefully pasted upon a large page; at this point the collector's diligence came to a full stop. Happily a print here and there is dated by its draughtsman, and the artist's initials or names are other guides.



AFTER WILTSHIRE GRAYLING. *From*
an Oil-Sketch by ARTHUR BATCHELOR.



OVER THE SEA FROM SKYE: with a Young Angler resting.
An Oil Painting by JOHN MACWHIRTER, R.A. (1839-1911).
By permission of Mrs. MacWhirter. Photograph by Hanfstaengl.



DRY-FLY FISHING, 1923.

From a Pen-Drawing by LIONEL EDWARDS.

The portraiture in this book is as follows :—

1. J. and G. Temple. " Salmon Fishing at Menzies Castle : Sir Robert at the Carry Pool." ¹

2. Percy R. Craft, 1884. " Weighing Fish at the Angling Club."

3. By Weedon Grossmith. " Whit-Monday on the River Lee."

4. By Weedon Grossmith. " Jack Fishing at Ringwood, Hants." Published in the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, January 10th, 1884, and showing three of the painter's friends in a punt.²

5. By M. Fitzgerald. " A Member of the Thames Angling Club," seated in a punt. He is accompanied by another sportsman, a sailor-like figure in a coarse jersey, who stands erect, with his trousers rolled up to his knees, and holds his rod as though fishing were an exercise in naval drill.

6. By M. Fitzgerald. " Weighing the Fish at a London Anglers' Club " : probably the Piscatorial Society ; the walls are decorated with many trophies of ideal fish shown triumphantly in glass cases. In this woodcut no fewer than twenty-eight members are depicted, and there's a very mournful, philosophic dog near the weighing-table.³

7. By A. F. Rolfe. " River Scene in Wales : Salmon-Fishing, Ascertaining the Weight." This woodcut represents four anglers of the eighteenth-seventies. One of them is seated on a flat slab of stone, his gaff in his right hand, and the left hand resting on a salmon. He is one of the Rolfe brothers, I believe. We need a Who's Who of Dead Anglers, compiled by experts, under the chairmanship of Mr. R. B. Marston, or of Mr. H. T. Sheringham.

8. By H. Woods, R.A. " Salmon Marking on the Tweed." In the seventies.

9. Frank Feller. " Fishing at ' The Bay,' West Drayton " : a good character-study of four anglers. Feller's work is more original than J. Temple's, though its penmanship also uses too many lines.

¹ The Temples, and particularly J. Temple, were very active for a considerable period as angling illustrators. They drew slickly in line, forming a steady-going routine, and heralding the *Daily Graphic's* first period. The *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* published a great deal of their work, generally in poor line blocks, from about 1878.

² The late Weedon Grossmith, painter and actor, like Sir J. Forbes Robertson, was interested by angling in art, and I have come upon woodcuts from three of his early angling compositions. The third is called " Too Thin ! " It shows a young angler striding away after no sport, overburdened with impedimenta. He carries a picnic basket under his left arm, so a girl has failed to keep an appointment.

³ Among the prints and drawings at the Piscatorial Society's Club Room, London, is a sketch in water-colour by G. Boulding, dated 1878, and showing nineteen of the members seated at T-shaped tables. There is no key, unfortunately.

V

Portraiture is present, more or less noticeably, in most figurework that is done from the life ; so we should be often entertained if we knew by name all of the persons whom we find in angling prints, pictures, and drawings. Thus Mr. Lamorna Birch, in a fly-fishing study painted expressly for this book, pressed one of his friends, Mr. Hughes, to pose for him. The weather was uncertain, the ground very moist, and the painter tells me that his own "catch" was a very bad cold which stopped his work a day too soon. His sketch was made just below the little village of Lamorna, where he often gets a small trout. It is a good long shot to throw a dry fly up under that primitive wee bridge, and sport there needs a magnifying hope, for trout from this rivulet are "busters" if they weigh a quarter of a pound each. The water is only about 6 ft. wide, except across bendy and shallow parts ; but in hazardous places, when fishing with a tiny 7-ft. rod, Mr. Lamorna Birch has plenty of fun and practice.

Though he is noted as a fly-fisher, he has made use of angling only now and then in his landscapes. A spacious and charming oil-colour of the Wye at Redbank, in Herefordshire, has a fly-fisher in the middle distance on our right ; and one of his water-colours, painted at Montreuil, has a trout fisherman in the foreground. But to those of us who love to see pictures of trout and salmon rivers, unaccompanied by a sporting episode, the art of Lamorna Birch is a happy one for research.

Some one has said that every pool of water is a changeful eye in a landscape ; it is also a changeful sky, and much else. Mr. Lamorna Birch is fascinated by the mirrored blues and greys in all water, and by inverted plots of landscapes broken by ripples. To another painter, Mr. Arnesby Brown, R.A., the sky is a wondrous romance, a pageant of airy islands and continents that annex one another, changing their shapes and their varied hues all day long. To see in his art some of his enchanted Norfolk cloudscapes is to find that one's memory can buy and keep them, a fortunate thrift indeed for the poor in pocket. This poet-realist has painted only one angling picture, a group of five children fishing ; unlike his usual style, as though somewhat influenced by the method of Le Sidaner, who in 1909, when this Arnesby Brown was exhibited at the Royal Academy, had been for some years well known to London connoisseurs.

A good many Academicians and Associates have taken some ideas from angling within the range of this chapter. The Pandeli Ralli Collection has a good joint work by Creswick and Frith, for example ; and some typical

prints can be bought after W. L. Wyllie, W. F. Witherington, F. R. Lee, Charles Landseer, Clarkson Stanfield, and several others. I have a fisherman in a characteristic landscape by J. W. Oakes, who died in 1887, and whose "Glen Muick, Aberdeenshire," in the Manchester City Art Gallery, is among the best pictures of the old Liverpool School. David Murray's "The Angler," exhibited at the R.A. in 1895, is a lazy Waltonian, lying beside the water and holding his rod sleepily; while Alfred Parsons, whose liking for angling rivers, such as the Kennet, began to show itself in water-colours as early as the eighteen-seventies, touched from time to time the spirit of Walton himself, as in the "Last Day for Salmon," shown at the R.A. in 1901. The late William Strang, for the Winchester Edition of *The Compleat Angler*, 1892, etched ten full pages and eleven head-pieces, which are often forgotten by students of his prints; and for the same edition, D. Y. Cameron made many etchings, with a rich and free line, full of colour and reposeful strength; charming as landscapes that enrich what they illustrate. Among the imaginary portraits of Walton, again, there is one by James Sant, showing Walton as a boy, and another by Abraham Cooper that contradicts one of the oldest maxims in the art of angling. Walton is seated as near to the water as he can get, fishing as a tyro.

The first work that A. J. Munnings exhibited at the R.A., in 1899, appealed to anglers, its motif being "Pike-Fishing in January," an oil-picture painted out of doors a little way from Norwich. John Lavery's first success at the Paris Salon, in 1883, was gained by a riverscape touched in rapidly at Nogent-sur-Marne, with two little figures patiently fishing. This outdoor study, "Les Deux Pêcheurs," won a place on the line, and it was bought by M. de Saint-Marceaux, father of the famous sculptor. At the R.A. of 1910, the late Sir Alfred East made use of angling, in a picture called "Morning Sunshine," with two fishermen; and a few years ago—the date is 1917—Mr. Algernon Talmage sent a charming work to the R.A., called "The Bass Fisher," a sportswoman very well painted. I failed to get permission to reproduce this picture.

In every book there are many disappointments of this kind. The late Sir Edward Poynter's "Nymph of the Stream," shown at the R.A. in 1907, is a fine picture of its school which ought to have been represented in this chapter. Not only is it a very good Poynter, with a waterfall riverscape full of sympathetic observation, but also, to my mind, it is the best work of idealism in angling that any student can find. The nude girl, fishing from a ledge of rock with a primitive rod and line, belongs, of course, to the same tradition



GLEN ASHDALE, ARRAN: "At Noon the fisher seeks his rest." A large Oil Painting, 48in. x 72in., by JOHN R. REID, R.I. Exhibited at the R.A. in 1910. The photograph by Henry Dixon & Son.



LOCH NESS AND GLEN MORRISTON, with an Angler in the distance. An Oil Painting by JOHN MACWHIRTER, R.A. (1839-1911). By permission of Mrs. MacWhirter. Photograph by Hanfstaengl.

of art which Leighton brought to its culminating point among our Academicians; but Poynter's landscape has delicate and persuasive qualities rarely attained by idealist arrangers of open-air backgrounds and foregrounds.

Two pictures more I have failed to get for reproduction, and both are by one of the American artists who have made their homes in England, G. H. Boughton, R.A. (1832-1905). At the R.A. in 1896 he was represented by "A Sportswoman on a Highland River." Two Scottish peasant girls are watching her from the parapet of a bridge, which rises across the foreground from right to left. One onlooker sits on the parapet, while the other leans over it, gazing at a lady angler who is playing a fish across the river. Another Boughton fishing piece dates from 1889, and I find that several artists remember it with pleasure: an episode of salmon fishing in Inverness-shire, a happy angler well up in the foreground, with a bent rod, and his big fish just splashing in brown water. On our left, in the middle distance, are four onlookers, with a slope of hillside behind them; a kilted Highlander, and three bonnie peasant women, who wear aprons and whose heads are bare. What one would think of this painting to-day one cannot foresee, but it delighted me in 1889; and it remains an attractive picture among Blackburn's *Royal Academy Notes*.

Everybody remembers G. F. Watts's charming little *putto* in "Good Luck to your Fishing"; he has a line but no rod, and belongs to a dreamland sea, "an unsubstantial fairy place," where anglers would feel unhappy. Fred Walker, A.R.A., who died in 1875, aged only thirty-five, finished, three years before his death, "A Fishmonger's Shop," with a wonderfully-painted old fishmonger, and a young woman in a yellow dress, and a youth who peers into a jar of eels. This picture is noted here because the fish are much better than the still-life studies of fish by the Rolfes, as by some other angling painters of the same period, such as A. W. Cooper, W. R. Bishop, J. R. Cullin, Edwin Edwards, R. T. Farren, C. Forster, E. A. Holroyd, C. J. Lewis, E. F. Niemann, J. T. Offord, G. T. Targett, and Stanley Wilson. One painter only in those days rivalled Fred Walker's fish, Robert Barrett Browning, the poet's only son, whose "Stall in the Fish-Market at Antwerp" dates from approximately the same time. R. B. Browning gave me many a good hint, twice in Antwerp, several times in Brussels, and twice at Dinant. Wherever he went big achievements were expected from his versatility, but all at once his career dwindled away and ended.¹

¹ Who knows the present whereabouts of these pictures by Fred Walker and R. B. Browning? It would have been useful to show them side by side.

There are incidental anglers in two or three of Fred Walker's pictures, most notably in "The Peaceful Thames"; and his kinsman in sentiment, G. H. Mason, A.R.A. (1818-1872), painted a pretty composition of "Young Anglers," which Waltner etched for Messrs. Agnew. I remember one angling picture of John Pettie, R.A., "A Fly-Fisher," and one by Herkomer, a water-colour called "Got Him!" Thanks to Mr. Croal Thomson, I am able to show in a reproduction that even Sir Laurence Alma-Tadema, R.A., O.M., added an episode of angling to the zeal with which he tried to recall into art phases of Roman life as intimate as those that appeal to us from Terence and Plautus, and from Cicero's letters. *Æsthetic* opinions change, and Tadema's fame is no longer what it was between 1879—when he passed from A.R.A. to R.A.—and about 1900; but no other painter has ever put into Roman archæology so much diligent and able handicraft, or an illusion of daily realness so varied that Gibbon the historian might say, if he returned to life, "After all, Rome did not fall, for here she is again, no longer congealed in marble statues, and shattered into ruined buildings, but with an intimate life in her which somehow I missed."

To attain this varying sensation of reality, Tadema disobeyed the rules of classical order in composition, diffusing his effects, dispersing his lines, and compiling pictures as far off from synthetical grouping as photographs are when they represent ceremonies in the street or functions at a Court. This little picture of a Roman lady angling in the midst of wealth, with her rod resting on a soft cushion, is an example, every part of it receiving an equal amount of care, skill, and patient definition.

Odd that Tadema, B. W. Leader, and H. W. B. Davis should have been fellow-Academicians! I have chosen an example of Leader's routine serenity, and one also from the freer work of H. W. B. Davis, who carried on, and greatly improved, those moods in English landscape and cattle pictures which T. S. Cooper, R.A., had made too polished and too clean.

Davis was a good fly-fisher, and I should like to see in an exhibition all the pictures and sketches that he made of Shakespeare's Wye—a river that is fascinating for many reasons. Mr. R. B. Marston said of it, in 1915, "that the oldest form of salmon-fly is coming into fashion on the most modern of salmon rivers, Shakespeare's Wye, which affords the greatest and most successful proof of the restoration of a derelict salmon river in the history of the world." The Wye, then, has achieved a sort of miracle, unlike the



A ROMAN LADY WATCHING HER ROD AND LINE. *From an Oil Painting by SIR LAURENCE ALMA-TADEMA, O.M., R.A. (1886-1912). By permission of D. Croal Thomson, Barbizon House, London.*



THE RIVER, WITH CHILDREN FISHING. An Oil
Painting (50in. X 49in.) by ARNESBY BROWN, R.A. Exhibited
in room of this B.

Thames, whose long history as a salmon river began to end about a hundred years ago.¹

H. B. Davis caught salmon in the Wye, and painted the pools from which he landed them. Like MacWhirter, he remained a British painter, proof against methods imported from abroad, and yet he had a house at Boulogne, where he lived occasionally, and where he painted many of his pictures. He was the son of a barrister to whom fly-fishing was a hobby ; father and son rambled together along riversides, and the son grew fond of angling and of landscapes. In 1852 he entered the R.A. schools, and three years later, after winning several school medals, his first landscapes were exhibited. Davis practised sculpture also, modelling animals as ably as he painted cattle. Like Vicat Cole, R.A. (1833-1893), he was a lover of Nature in her milder moods, while MacWhirter at his best put his heart into her wilder aspects. His earlier canvases are more "kilted" and adventurous than the later, usually, but in 1905 he showed his youth renewed in his painting of a young Celtic angler playing a fish on the Isle of Skye. To my mind this work sums up a Victorian phase of Scottish landscape painting more notably than the occasional liking for angling shown by Peter Graham, R.A., or by Joseph Farquharson, A.R.A.

Peter Graham I do not illustrate. Such a picture as his "Mountain Stream," with shaggy Highland cattle on our right, and a youth angling across the water, in the middle distance, left, used to be popular ; and as for Joseph Farquharson, his "Salmon Fishing on the Dee" is characteristic. Recently it was published again as a small and good colour-print added to a well-printed booklet of artificial flies made by an expert at Perth. There is also a large print—an engraving by Herbert Sedcole, 33 in. by 21½ in., besides ample margin for framing—that Messrs. Frost and Reed published ; very welcome as an episode of active fishing, though the nearer man, with a gaff in his hand, looks too far off from the angler, and not close enough to the splashing fish. He stands on our left, waiting, with his body bent forward, while the angler is among rocks on the other side of a pleasant inlet. Even from a standpoint of sport this composition suggests a question, Why

¹ Between 1794 and 1822, according to Buckland's *Familiar History of British Fishes*, 483 salmon were caught in the Thames, weighing 7,346½ lbs. Netting appears to have been too common, for one net-maker alone, with a shop in Fenchurch Street, received £800 a year for nets used in the Thames. Chelsea Reach was among the netting places, and a fisherman named Hobbs took twenty salmon in a single haul. A salmon hooked in the Buck Pool, June 26th, 1793, weighed 42 lbs. ; his length was 49 in. After 1822 an astonishing change came, salmon disappearing from the river, till at last no more came in the spring. Meantime, somehow, salmon continued to run up the polluted waters of the Liffey and the Clyde.

should two strong men be needed to land a single hooked fish that is plainly defeated?

And another question comes into the mind here. Is a fishing print 33 in. by 21½ in., exclusive of its margin, too large to be in accord with present-day requirements of home life? As soon as flats became popular, and the service problem began to grow towards its present crisis and climax, the need of smaller homes should have had an effect on pictures and prints as on other household things, like the dimensions of tables and bookcases. Yet the Victorian custom of making prints too large has been continued frequently, helping to demode many things which should be collected because they mark periods, like some of the angling prints after Douglas Adams, and George Earl, Frank Carless, Erskine Nicol, Charles Whymper, and W. Dendy Sadler.¹

Whistler laid it down as a rule that prints should be small; and although rules in art invite the discovery of exceptions, such as we find among Brangwyn's big etchings, yet large prints are the most likely to be carried out of vogue by every changing tide of fashionable taste. On ordinary walls they occupy too much space, and large portfolios become a nuisance, as even print-sellers find. So I cannot help believing that angling prints, in colour or in black and white, should never be larger than Norman Wilkinson's dry points, or than Seymour Haden's little series of angling etchings, "Spinning for Trout," "Grayling Fishing" (11⅞ in. by 7⅞ in.), "Thames Fishermen" (8⅞ in. by 5⅞ in.), "On the Test," "Sonning Bridge" (9⅞ in. by 6⅞ in.), and "Ye Compleat Angler," a rapid sketch of an old woman crouched on a bankside and trying to hook a fish for her dinner.

Etchers who have been attracted by anglers, or by angling haunts, have been Whistlerian toward the question of size, like Mr. Martin Hardie, whose water-colours are as good as his etchings. Let us say to publishers of sporting prints: "Extend the household life of your new proofs and prints by decreasing their size—and their margins also." It is easy to recall the time when proofs after Douglas Adams, large proofs of Trout Fishing and Salmon Fishing, were very popular, some of them going up to three or four times their published prices. The same thing happened with a great many large, and even very large, proofs of the mid-Victorian times, till at last a great reaction against them helped to kill the beautiful arts of wood and steel engraving.

¹ Charles Whymper's drawings may be studied conveniently in a set of six angling sketches from which Frank Paton made proof etchings on India paper, to be published in an oblong folio.



A YOUNG CELT ANGLING IN THE ISLE OF SKYE.
An Oil Painting (30in. x 48in.) by JOHN MACWHIRTER, R.A. (1839-1911). By permission of Mrs. MacWhirter. The Photograph by H. Dixon, London.

In this matter of size, then, let us be Whistlerian. As Whistler was a waterman in his fondness for rivers, students often wish to know if he liked angling also, and used it now and then in his work. There are persons who believe that he etched an angler in a punt, and signed it in 1861. Thus a man of note, writing to me says: "Do you know one of Whistler's earliest etchings, 'The Angler,' a man in a punt, fishing?" But Mr. M. H. Spielmann has pointed out that the man holds a pole, not a rod, and pushes it into the water.

Still, one of Whistler's jokes, impishly carried through, is an episode of angling, and it implies that he liked fishing, for his joke was improvised and it required a line with a small hook. He was at Venice, worried by hot weather, and by a landlady against whom he bore a grudge. One afternoon, when the landlady was not at home, Whistler went to his window, and, whilst leaning out of it, noticed far below a bowl of goldfish that gleamed on his landlady's window-ledge. An idea came into his mind. Why not let down a fishing-line, hook the goldfish one by one, fry them afterwards, and then lower them back into their bowl? All this was done patiently; and when his landlady returned she blamed the sun's heat, so Whistler was happy.

VI

When an editor chooses the pictures that he can get for a book on sporting art, he knows that their translation from varied colour into monotone will bring many surprises. Pictures of a high rank generally go through this test very well indeed; but sporting pictures (as a rule) are not only more difficult to paint than ordinary portraiture and plain landscape; very often they come to us from painters of the second and third lines, minor artists who have been staunch to home-grown methods and traditions, and whose claim upon us in the history of sport is not one to be forgotten.

Why is it that print publishers are inert when even a painter of the first rank, a Sargent or a Furse, paints an angling picture which every lover of sport should desire to know? The answer is that prints for collectors need far and away more method than that which has been given to them within the scope of this chapter. They should be issued in categories, not by rival men of business, but by a body of publishers working together with enough capital. The categories are well defined, and this chapter shows them all in several illustrations apiece. Let me name them one by one.

1. Angling and Portraiture. This we have studied; it has received no

attention worth speaking of from print publishers, and very little from buyers of pictures.

2. Still Life Studies of Fish, such as Mr. Williams Walls, R.S.A., has painted with admirable enthusiasm. In this chapter Mr. Walls is represented by a brace of trout lying on a mossy bank along with two eels; and a friend tells him that many anglers will be shocked when they see royal trout and plebeian eels painted together. I don't see why. Fish are so beautiful that strong contrasts are needed when we wish to see a finely painted impression of their individual shapes and of their variations of colour.¹

3. Angling Landscapes without Anglers, as in D. Y. Cameron's etchings for *The Compleat Angler*, or with only an incidental angler, as in James Docharty's impressive "Salmon Stream," a picture of the Lochy Water flowing between rocky banks, thinly wooded. On a height to the left are some ruins of Tor Castle, dimly seen; and, behind on our right, is the uneven crest of Ben Nevis. Docharty died in 1878, his forty-ninth year. His picture of "A Salmon Stream" bears the same date, and remains a notable picture in the Glasgow Gallery, like Horatio McCulloch's "Loch Maree," and David Farquharson's "On the Achray," and Sam Bough's "Loch Achray," with a sunset sky glowing behind the Trossach Knolls and the great bulk of gloomy Ben Venue. These Scottish painters, Bough, Docharty, David Farquharson, McCulloch, are among the painters who should appear in the category of angling in art; and there are many others.² This autumn the Fine Art Society, London, will publish two of Mr. Lamorna Birch's Angling River Pictures, "Donside, Kenna, Aberdeenshire," and "A Flooded River, Williamson Pool, Pontypant, North Wales"; free in style, refreshing, and desirable.

4. Active Angling through all of its Landscape Phases, as in some freely handled pictures by John R. Reid, R.I., now a veteran of seventy-two, with a mind stored with memories of games and sports, and of other country life.

¹ Our national attitude towards still-life fish pictures has been cold and formal. Foreign masters, notably Snyders, set a magnificent example, yet few English painters between Barlow's time and the later Victorians wished to paint a fish superbly. In natural history studies I know nothing so good as *The Fresh-water Fishes of Great Britain*, drawn and described by Mrs. T. Edward Bowdich. London. Printed for the Authoress, 1828. FOLIO. There are forty-seven plates, all beautifully painted by hand. Mrs. Bowdich is a colourist. Students should compare Mrs. Bowdich with Jonathan Couch, F.L.S., whose *History of Fishes*, 4 vols., 1862, is illustrated with plates in colour after his own drawings. The late D. B. Fearing catalogued, under the name J. F. Henning, eighty-nine coloured engravings of Fish, an ob. folio.

² Docharty painted an active angling, "Gaffing his Salmon," but its present whereabouts cannot be discovered. In my search for it I have been aided by Mr. T. C. F. Brothie, superintendent of the Glasgow Art Galleries and Museums.



LORD SELBORNE ANGLING NEAR ITCIN ABBAS, about
Twenty-four Years ago. *From an Oil Painting by JOHN R. REID, R.I.*



BENSON ON THAMES. From an Oil Painting, 40in. X 50in.,
by A. CHEVALLIER TAYLER. Exhibited in 1912 at the
Royal Academy. The Photograph by H. Dixon, London.

In 1889, at Paris, the Exposition-Universelle awarded a gold medal to J. R. Reid. His "County Cricket Match," painted in 1878, belongs to the Tate Gallery. Mr. Reid, as a boy, was apprenticed to a house-painter, like John Phillip, R.A., and Alphonse Legros. For three years he toiled at this trade in Edinburgh; and then, like many French and Belgian lads, he ended his day's work by attending art classes every evening. This brought him under the influence of two very generous artists, G. P. Chalmers, R.S.A. (who began life apprenticed to a ship chandler), and William McTaggart (whose father was a farmer at Aros, Argyllshire). Reid learnt how to paint pluckily, with a full and free brush. His colour from the first has been richly decorative and original. He chose an open-air struggle, with plenty of typical figures in its variety, and with some wind also from the sea. A writer has said that no picture of active angling is to be found in an English public gallery. There is a good one by J. R. Reid in the Victoria and Albert Museum, showing the Thames, and Chiswick Mall below Kew Bridge, and a Dickensian angler in a grey-white tall hat attending to his worm. Here freshwater fishing and town life are blended together; and the picture's date, 1888, is younger than the old angler's costume. I have chosen for illustration two of Mr. Reid's pictures, and both make virile prints. One is thirteen years old, and the other twenty-four. In the latter Lord Selborne is the angler. Compare this work with Mr. Chevallier Tayler's "Benson on Thames," a smiling picture, and note their telling contrast of mood, and also of style. Mr. Tayler was at the Slade School, under Legros, when Bunthorne and the *Æsthetic Craze* were putting ideas for a comic opera into the mind of W. S. Gilbert; when the Grosvenor Gallery was Art's Own Elysium, a holy place thronged with diligent whisperers; and when dreams at the Slade formed a durable tradition of variable and confident hopefulness. When I associate memories of those days with this good angling picture, "Benson on Thames," I seem to be smoking enchanted cigarettes.

In this category of Active Angling there are phases which may not look like sport, but which belong to the history of freshwater fishing, as in the two episodes which Mr. W. G. Burn Murdoch has contributed.¹ Loch fishing by

¹ Mr. Burn Murdoch's books are well known, particularly his *Modern Whaling and Bear Hunting*, his *From Edinburgh to the Antarctic*, and *From Edinburgh to India and Burmah*. His very successful experiments in rearing trout were published in *Country Life*; and now people come to him with facts from his own research as though they had something new to relate. Is Mr. Burn Murdoch the only British sportsman who holds a Norse Certificate as a gunner-harpooner in the modern style? Anglers will remember that he illustrated a volume of angling studies by Andrew Lang.

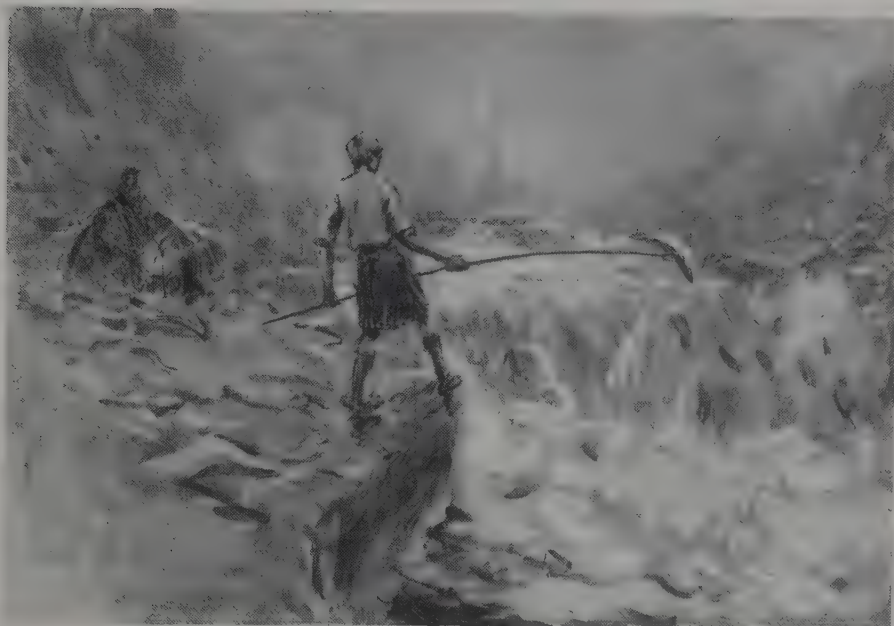
lantern light appeals to the boy in most men, as it did to Sir Walter Scott ; and when one thinks of it pictorially as a Rembrandt among fishing effects, one is astonished that Raeburn, an angler, and several other big Scottish masters, neglected to win from it some pictures. Mr. Burn Murdoch has angled with such different sorts of tackle that his memory passes from trout fishing in a burn to whale fishing with a 5-in. line, and to hooking and landing a shark 15 ft long. As for salmon spearing, with its long history, he remembers a Scottish tinker whose experiences suggested several pictures, and who said that when the spear was long, a heavy salmon at the far end of it was trying to a sportsman ! Among woodcuts of the eighteen-seventies and 'eighties, I have come upon several salmon spearings, notably one by F. Dadd, which is clearly not a poaching episode, and another by an artist whose initials are J. M. L. R., and whom I have not yet identified. In this woodcut, " Braemar, Salmon Spearing on the Dee," the spearers stand in open order across the river, sportsmen with their attendants ; one of them has stepped into a hole and is out of his depth ; he can't swim, so a spear is held out to him, while several of his companions laugh and joke. The spears are tridents, while in Frank Dadd's composition they have two prongs only, like the tinker's spear in Mr. Burn Murdoch's rapid sketch. If you turn to the Supplement in Bewick's *Birds*, vol. i, A.D. 1821, p. 13, you will find a tailpiece showing a very different spear, a quintent, and a man who seems to be afloat on a pair of small rafts, which are attached in some way to his ankles.¹

Again, Mr. J. Shirley-Fox, " Brush and Feather " of *The Field*, shows very well, in the illustration given on p. 83, that active angling has decorative charm when it is silhouetted ; that is, when outlined drawings are filled in with a uniform colour, such as black. It was a French finance minister of the year 1759, Etienne de Silhouette, who invented this art by making profile portraits on the walls of his rooms. Many English artists employed it with success, but not in fishing subjects, so far as I can find out—unless we regard as silhouetting the occasional work done by glass-cutters. Thus Major Oswald Magniac has a very fine old angling cup of glass upon which an episode of active fishing is deeply and cleverly incised, so that a coloured liquor may shine vividly through the thinned glass. Mr. Shirley-Fox

¹ Several anglers have written to me about some interesting cuts among Bewick's tailpieces. Vol. ii of his *Birds* : Wading and Fly-Fishing, p. 57, and p. 62 ; p. 48, a fisherman sheltering from rain behind a tree, a rod in hand, and three rods in the water ; p. 97, a seated angler engaged with his hook ; p. 349, solitary figure seated with his rod behind him. Bewick's *Quadrupeds*, vol. ii, A.D. 1818 ; p. 436, angler without waders standing in water and baiting his line ; p. 440, a solitary rod stuck in a bank.



FISHING BY LANTERN LIGHT. *From a small Oil
Painting by W. G. BURN MURDOCH, F.R.S.G.S.*



SALMON SPEARING IN SCOTLAND: A Poacher. *From
a sketch in Body-Colour by W. G. BURN MURDOCH, F.R.S.G.S.*

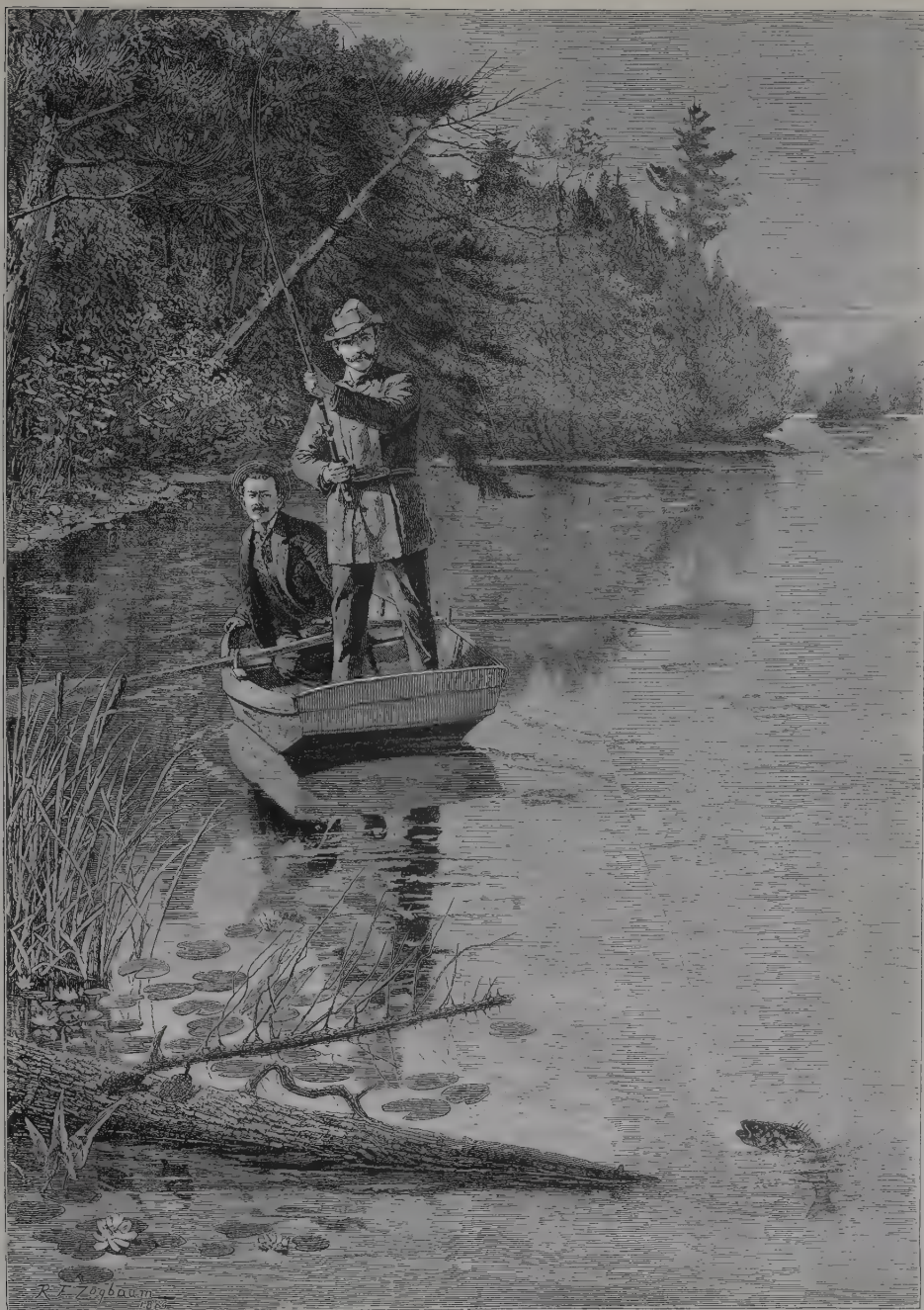


A SILHOUETTE OF ACTIVE ANGLING.
By J. SHIRLEY-FOX.



GO YOURSELF SO FAR FROM THE WATER-SIDE.

Drawn by E. J. SULLIVAN, for Messrs. Dent & Co.'s edition of "The Compleat Angler," 1896.



BLACK BASS FISHING IN THE LAKES
OF THE ADIRONDACKS, STATE OF NEW
YORK. *From a woodcut after R. F. ZOGBAUM (1884).*

designed his good silhouette for the cover of his new book, *Angling Adventures of an Artist*, published recently by John Murray.

Before leaving this varied category of active fishing and its relation to prints, I should like to note again how tepid we are when we compare our illustrated papers with those of the eighteen-seventies and 'eighties, though woodcuts from important drawings were vastly more expensive than half-tones are now. Able wood engravers were well paid. On my desk I have a double-page woodcut after R. Caton Woodville, dated 1884; it measures $18\frac{1}{2}$ in. by $12\frac{3}{8}$ in., and represents "Bass Fishing from a Pier on the South Coast," in which two tightly-laced girls are spectators. Another double-page is after J. E. H., whom I take to be John Evan Hodgson, R.A. (1831-1895): "Trout Fishing, the First Cast of the Season," a good print of the period. Arthur Hopkins, a popular man, got some ideas from fishing; William Small, R.I., was another contributor, like Henry Woods, R.A., William Geddes, G. T. Targett, and S. E. Waller, who chose for one subject "Eel Spearing on the Scottish Border," by moonlight and torchlight. Some artists contrasted angling and war. One print after G. Durand shows how the French were defeated at Neuilly Bridge, Paris, while a pipe-smoking angler in a blouse and tall hat went on watching his float, a basket by his side. There is a guardsman among Joseph Nash's line of anglers in his "Fishing Match on the River Lea at Ponder's End"; and another line of anglers, from a sketch by Alfred Taylor, is inscribed: "After the Campaign in Egypt; Peaceful Times near Aboukir Forts." From all this enterprise of a time that just preceded modernism, I choose one typical print, a woodcut of active angling by Zogbaum, an American who was liked in England, like W. Brackett, whose four pictures of salmon fishing—"The Rise," "The Leap," "The Struggle," and "Landed"—made a hit in 1883 at the great Fisheries Exhibition. Modernism has talked a great deal, and written a great deal, but its activity on original sporting prints has been far behind that of the pre-modernity days, which the inexperienced regard as neolithic.

5. Humour and Angling, including the Political Phases. I have chosen H. B. to represent the angling of politics, but Tenniel used the same traditions, once in connection with the *Alabama* Question. Tenniel's angular method of drawing was a good influence, English draughtsmen being often "too round"; but his linear display was too elaborate. Still, he remains a master, with a grasp of mind that raises political criticism into historical statesmanship. The contrast between him and "H. B.," John Doyle, is very entertaining. Then there is "H. B.'s" son, Dicky Doyle, remarkable for his playful,

elfin water-colours as well as for his cartoons and book illustrations. Thackeray, Dickens, Ruskin, a trio of contrasts, liked and admired "Dicky"; and it seems probable that Dicky's water-colours had an influence on the youth of Arthur Rackham, and also on that of James E. Christie, whose fantasy of "The Red Fisherman" dates from 1893.¹

Humour is to artists what it was to Charles Lamb—a great anxiety when it has to be ready at a given moment for an editor. The graphic humour that plays around angling is often tiresome, because overdone and dear-bought; and it has periods, technically, and also as fun. A great deal of it needs the indefinable thing called Wit—a certain sharpness, or barbed point, added to the brevity of a fine aphorism. Still, everybody finds his own preferences among the graphic humorists. Mine are Rackham, Joseph Crawhall, Belcher, E. J. Sullivan (who has illustrated *The Compleat Angler*), Low, Frank Reynolds, Max Beerbohm, Phil May, Hugh Thomson, Caldecott, Charles Keene, John Leech, H. K. Browne, and Rowlandson.

Crawhall's originality must be studied in his unique books, which, unfortunately, were published in tiny editions. *Chaplets from Coquet-Side* was printed in a hundred copies, 1873, 8vo., by Robert Robinson of Newcastle-on-Tyne. Sixteen of the copies, extra illustrated for private distribution, were not for sale. A collector is fortunate to possess one of them, like the late Daniel B. Fearing, who was also the proud owner of a series of whimsical water-colours by Joseph Crawhall, *Angling Quips and Sporting Skits*, inlaid, with witty inscriptions in the artist's hand. Remember also *The Compleatest Angling Booke that ever was Writ, Being done oute of ye Hebrewe and Other Tongues by a Person of Honor*. This octavo is among the scarcest angling books in the world. Its first edition comprises only forty copies.

If print publishers had been fully alert, anglers would have had prints after all of the graphic humorists, present and past. Does anyone know a good fishing episode by Caldecott, or by H. K. Browne? H. K. B. drew a "Patient Angler," but where is it now? Hugh Thomson drew some Walton illustra-

¹ "The Red Fisherman," a masterpiece of original fantasy, hangs to-day in the Paisley Museum. Its eeriness, or diablerie, is accompanied by a quotation from Præd:

"All alone by the side of the pool
A tall man sat on a three-legged stool."

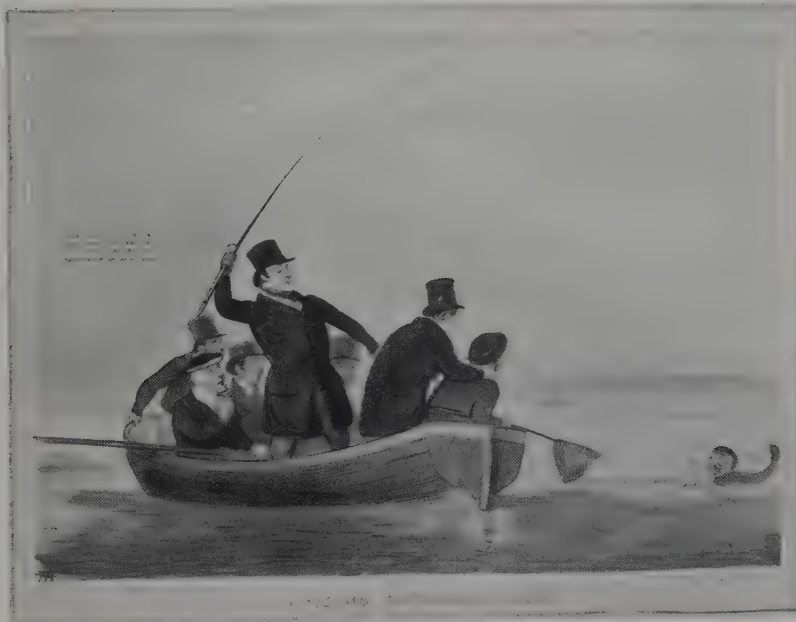
It is not angling, but fishing such as Tyl Eulenspiegel might have invented for one of his droll freaks. One of Christie's friends tells me that this Scottish artist had a tremendous personality. His head was leonine, and his proportions were Falstaffian; as a raconteur, in moods of every sort, he was inimitable.

Palmerton: "And I bait my hook in vain."



Wellington to Sir Robert Peel: "I suspect these gentlemen may be a long time in that quarter, before they catch any fish..."

LORD JOHN RUSSELL ANGLING IN CONSERVATIVE WATERS: "I have not got as much as a nibble." Political Cartoons by "H.B." [i.e., JOHN DOYLE, 1797-1868].



ANGLING FOR MORGAN O'CONNELL. Wellington to Sir Robert Peel: "When you rise a heavy fish, strike rather gently; give him plenty of line, and when you begin to wind up, do so quickly." From a print lent by J. Rimell.



THE LAST STRUGGLE. *From an Angling illustration by an artist unknown. The costume is unusual for the period. The John Lane Collection. Charles Bentley may be suggested (c. 1800-1854).*



THURSDAY. *An Oil Painting by W. DENDY SADLER, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1880, when its painter was twenty-six. Tate Gallery. Photograph by W. A. Mansell, London.*

tions for Sir Frederick Macmillan, who has kindly allowed me to print four from the original blocks. His fanciful interpretation of *The Angler's Song*, exquisitely graceful, quaintly and elusively humorous, was made known by *The English Illustrated Magazine*, December 1888. It comprises ten drawings. Thomson took some liberties with history, if we look at his drawings in their relation to seventeenth-century costumes, and rods and reels ; but as Walton's genius outlived its own period, Thomson wished to give the spirit of a ballad that is always making new friends. His eight designs for *Coridon's Song* have no angler among their many characters, but they have daintiness and manliness, fun, beauty, and a very pleasant sympathy for horses and cows.

Among Phil May's drawings I remember only one idea suggested by angling ; and as it invites the sport to enter a madhouse—"Come up here !" —it sets me thinking partly of certain artists who have died insane, and partly of others whose conduct has been a sort of suicide. Some forty-five years ago, a humorist at a low ebb drew a Bill Sikes angler, and called his drawing "The Gentle Craft !" . . . At its best, humour is often a rebound from sorrow, or melancholy ; and when it arises from youthful high spirits, it needs judgment, self-control. Observation, far more often than imagination, causes funny ideas to grow of their own accord ; and who can say which group of graphic humorists to prefer, the one dominated mainly by imagination, like Rackham and Hugh Thomson, or the observers of daily life, like Belcher, Keene, and Leech ?

Neither Belcher nor Rackham, I believe, has put angling into his drawings ; and I have seen no political fishermen by Low, Raven Hill, and Bernard Partridge. G. E. Studdy's athletic fishing drollery has appeared in a book, accompanied by an epitome of hints on angling, very amusingly written by H. T. Sheringham.¹ Then there are two veterans, Harry Furniss,² and W. Dendy Sadler, who in 1880 began to unite monastic life with humorous fishing. Prints after Mr. Sadler's pictures were bought eagerly, and among their most friendly admirers were the Capuchin Monks of Crawley, in Sussex.

There is always one hindrance to graphic humour in sport ; at any moment it may be defeated by a few brief verses, or by a paragraph of comedy, which may be unintentional. As an example of unintended burlesque, I take a little paragraph quoted from a French paper by *The Westminster Gazette*. Its writer intended to show admiration for King George as a salmon fisher, and familiarity with English customs. Note the result :

¹ *Fishing, a Diagnosis by H. T. Sheringham, and Symptoms by G. E. Studdy.* Published by *The Field*, and not yet so well known as it should be.

² His and Burnand's *Incomplete Angler*, and sketches for illustrated papers.

"He is an angler of the first force, this King of Britain. Behold him there, as he sits motionless under his umbrella patiently regarding his many-coloured floats! How obstinately he contends with the elements! It is a summer day of Britain; that is to say, a day of sleet, and fog, and tempest. But what would you? It is as they love it, those who would follow the sport. Presently the King's float begins to descend. My God! but how he strikes! The hook is implanted in the very bowels of the salmon. The King rises. He spurns aside his footstool. He strides strongly and swiftly towards the rear. In good time the salmon comes to approach himself to the bank. Aha!



GEORGE DU MAURIER (1831-1896).

Punch, 1865.

ENCOURAGING PROSPECT!

Piscator Juvenis: "Any sport, sir?"
 Piscator Senex: "Oh, yes; very good sport."
 Piscator Juvenis: "Bream?"
 Piscator Senex: "No!"

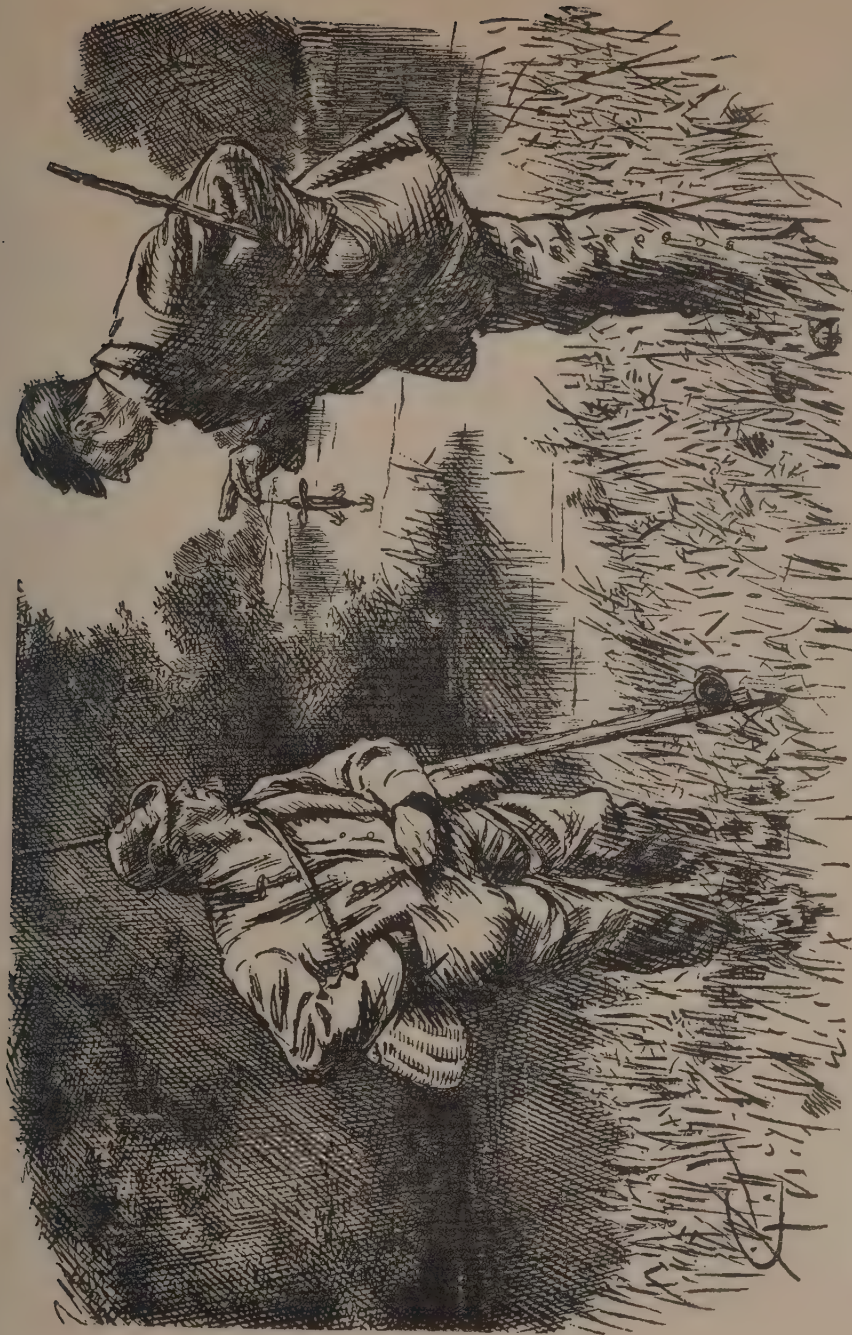
Piscator Juvenis: "Perch?"
 Piscator Senex: "No!"
 Piscator Juvenis: "What sport, then?"
 Piscator Senex: "Why, keeping clear of the weeds."

The King has cast aside his rod. He hurls himself flat on the ground on his victim. They splash and struggle in the icy water. Name of a dog! But it is a brave laddie! The gillie, a kind of outdoor domestic, administers the coup de grace with his pistol. The King cries with a very shrill voice, 'Hip! Hip! Hurrah!' On these red-letter days his Majesty George dines on a haggis and a whisky grog. Like a true Scotsman, he wears only a kilt."

How can draughtsmen compete against this comedy of errors? Though graphic humour does endure from time to time, as in Leech's angling



SIR EDWIN LANDESEER, R.A., in the Act of Angling. A Water-Colour by J. F. LEWIS, R.A. (1806-1876). Some critics believe that Landseer painted the Dog in this picture, but Lewis won his earlier success as a painter of animals. He and Landseer were intimate friends, and studied together, making careful dissections. The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.



CHARLES KEENE (1823-1891).

"IN FLAGRANTE."

Keeper (coming on him unawares): "Do you call this Fishing with a Fly, sir?"
Brigson: "Eh?—I ah—well, I— Look here—have a—(diving for his flask)—take a nip? Do!"
Reproduced from the Original Drawing by permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

adventures of Mr. Briggs, and in some of Keene's fishing conceptions, yet prose, as a rule, and good verse, have a much better chance of living, because a few lines of print suggest many changing pictures to every reader. Still, if the Proprietors of *Punch* republished all of the angling fun which has appeared in their paper, from to-day back to Leech's lovable good nature, we should have a delightful book. Sometimes the wording is poor, as below the sketch which I have chosen from Du Maurier's earlier style, which was often better than the later one, because less troubled by a mixture of haste with too much elaborated hatching. Phil May's economy of living line would



CHARLES KEENE (1823-1891)

By permission of the Proprietors of "*Punch*."

EXTRAORDINARY TAKE OF TWIN SALMON.

have been invaluable as an example to illustrators of the eighteen-sixties and seventies. It was heralded by the originality of Charles Keene, another big master of line; but his outlook upon life, I think, was too detached, too impersonal, too independent of love and pity, and of other qualities of the heart. For this reason it created scarcely a type of character that one either really likes or really dislikes. To be neutral towards human life and character is to achieve a great deal as an artist opposed to partisanship, but surely life without partisanship would be Utopia, that dream-world where neutrality



MR. BRIGGS PRACTISES WITH HIS RUNNING TACKLE. *From a Colour-Print after JOHN LEECH, who died 1864, aged 46. Reproduced by permission of the proprietors of "Punch."*



TRIUMPHANT SUCCESS OF MR. BRIGGS. *The pike flies at him, and barks like a dog. From a Print lent by James Rimell & Son, London.*

gets rid of human nature, while retaining somehow the bodies and the brains of women and men. Briefly, Charles Keene is rarely among the humanists of humour ; but as a draughtsman, whose apt and free touch is always free and broad, expressively original, he remains a masterly influence. Mr. Belcher is a modernist Keene, with a passion for observing character among the poor. Foreign artists continue to regard Keene as stronger than any other English observer of his period. Though his handling pretty often may seem to be rough and hurried, his comrades on *Punch* knew that Keene was untiringly



CHARLES KEENE (1823-1891).

By permission of the Proprietors of "*Punch*."

"THERE'S MANY A SLIP," &c.

Waggles saw a splendid three-pound trout in a quiet place on the Thames one evening last week. Down he comes the next night, making sure of him! But some other people had seen him too!!!

careful ; taking as much time as possible over chosen subjects, because he could then consider what to leave out. All of his qualities, then, from his neutrality to the sketchiness that looks improvised, were premeditated, won from his thoughtful self-control.

Leech rarely appeals to us as a neutral. Like Charles Dickens, he acts heartily among his own conceptions and is certain that he cannot note with an interest too personal what he hears and what he sees. Mainly for these reasons Linley Sambourne described Leech as surely by far the ablest "all

round " delineator of force and character that the nineteenth century produced. " No matter what the subject—the human or the brute creation, beauty or braggart vulgarity, the sea, sport, life in all its forms, natural or artificial—all alike were rendered by him with a truth and fidelity, and wrapped in a humorous gracefulness, which will be a joy to untold generations to come." ¹

Sambourne did not write of the fact, an important fact, that Leech as a graphic artist suffered greatly from a routine of wood-engraving, by which his delicacy and beauty of line were often cut into a recipe of vigour. Readers of *Punch* imagined that he sketched boldly, and rather harshly, in pen-and-ink, whereas his method was as finely managed as the small handwriting of Thackeray. After making studies for his week's work—sometimes in water-colour, more often in pencil—Leech, well rehearsed, drew with a hard pencil on the wood block, revealing a delicate precision of touch that was alive with the mood of feeling by which his humour was controlled. I have chosen a water-colour sketch to show how he prepared for a half-page in *Punch*, and how his composition suggested changes.

In *Punch* (vol. 45, July 4, 1863) you will find the woodcut of this water-colour, with notable alterations. The wording is improved, and runs below a heading as follows :—

PLEASANT

Friend (*to Novice at Salmon Fishing*) : " I say, old boy, mind how you wade ; there are some tremendous holes, fourteen or fifteen feet deep."

Again, in the woodcut the friend smokes a pipe ; his beard is fuller, and his hat has flies in it. Behind him the rocks are well separated, and the river flows between them. As for the tyro, his cap is decorated with casts, and its ribbons are windblown, like my angler's whiskers, which have grown a good inch or more since the water-colour was touched in. Further, his line, no longer neat, is becoming a plaything for a breezy day, and its gut very soon will wriggle into tangles more than Gordian !

Fifteen months and twenty days after this print appeared in *Punch*, John Leech died, October 29th, 1864. One fishing subject was published soon after his death, in *Punch's Almanack* for 1865. It is called " Pisciculture. The New Patent Traction Crane. Buffins lands a fine *Silurus Glanis*, 400 lbs. weight, after an exciting run of four miles." Float-fishing, too, with a chain cable, and Buffins not in the least out of breath. Quite a pleasant,

¹ *The Magazine of Art*, December 1891, p. 42.



MR. BRIGGS TRIES FOR MANY HOURS A LIKELY PLACE FOR A PERCH. *From a Colour-Print after JOHN LEECH. (By permission of the proprietors of "Punch.")*



A SALMON RUNS AWAY WITH MR. BRIGGS. *From a Colour-Plate after JOHN LEECH. By permission of the proprietors of "Punch."*

smiling landscape, with a conveniently good bankside for the patent engine to run upon, impeded by its wee wheels.

As for Mr. Briggs and His Doings, he is the Pickwick of angling humour, to whom the present generation should introduce itself. Sometimes the comedy is heroic, as when the fish having refreshed himself and recovered his proud spirits, bolts again with poor Mr. B., who is watched by a quartette of little gipsy children. On arriving at Hell's Hole in the Tay he is detained for three-quarters of an hour while the fish sulks at the bottom. . . . Every design has its own fun.

The Piscatorial Society, London, has a set of small anglings by Leech which have never been published, I believe ; they are vignettied sketches touched with water-colour, shut up in a large folio of prints and drawings.



By E. H. NEW.

CHAPTER IV

FROM JAMES INSKIPP TO JOHN S. COTMAN AND J. M. W. TURNER

I

INSKIPP died in 1868, and Cotman in 1842. Cotman was born in 1782, and Inskipp in 1790.

This chapter, then, covers twenty-six years between the death-years, and, within the span of Inskipp's life, seventy-eight years of British art influences. These influences were of four sorts: some were still growing, very notably those that came from George Stubbs's naturalism in sport and from Constable's discoveries as an open-air landscapist; others passed out of vogue, as in the displacement of water-colour drawings by water-colour paintings; several had unique qualities that formed no school traditions, while two were newcomers, and rivals. Turner, who died in 1851, has had only a small handful of disciples; William Blake, who died in 1827, has had no offspring; and John Sell Cotman is another lonely master, whose finest work is poetry as well as beautiful and original pictorial design. The new influences were the rise of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and that prolific development from Constable's intrepid aims, which the French carried from stage to stage till it achieved the doctrines of Impressionism.

I should have liked to show in this book that some pictures of angling were affected by all of these influences. A. W. Hunt, for example, was affected both by Turner and by the P.R.B., but I have found nothing of his. This applies also to Albert Goodwin, whose art grows into an atmosphere of its own. The nearest I can get at present to the P.R.B. is J. F. Lewis, R.A., its predecessor.

Before we study the pictures which are reproduced, let me note that the period covered by this chapter has appealed to foreign critics as more genuinely English than any other. Also these critics have believed that, as they have visited our public galleries and our private collections as independent researchers, free from prejudice, their judgment is likely to be much



ANGLING, OLD AGE, AND YOUTH. From a Lithograph in Colour by J. Giles, after a painting by JAMES INSKIPP (1790-1868). From a print lent by W. T. Spencer.



SNIGGLING FOR EELS. *From a Woodcut by M. JACKSON, after a Drawing by EDWARD DUNCAN (1804-1882). First published in "The Illustrated London News," 17th August, 1850.*



TROLLING FOR JACK. *From a Woodcut after EDWARD DUNCAN, March 30th, 1850. Reproduced from a print lent by W. T. Spencer, London.*

better than our inherited admiration for some artists, and our present reaction against others.

As a rule, what foreigners like best in British art is precisely what we British like best in the arts of China and Japan, namely, outstanding national qualities, free from epidemics of cosmopolitanism. But the very essence of modernism is a wayward novelty-seeking which has circulated generally from the same radial centre—France—and which has had effects more or less noticeable among the artists of all countries. Do we find among modernists any one aim which runs from to-day back to the first efforts of French Impressionists? If so, it is a firm belief that nationalism in art is a mistake, because it prevents changing experiments, which travel far and wide like the researches made by men of science.

For two reasons there is no need to be at all troubled about these matters. Art is obedient always to the law of action and reaction, and there is no sign yet, none whatever, that nations are losing their long-inherited characteristics. Sporting pictures have felt neither the full action of innovating experimenters, nor the full reaction against sectarian ardour. As a whole, then, they have made their appeal to the normal tastes of the British people; and if they had received more support from the best masters they would have been typical of that varied nationalism which foreign judges like to find in British paintings.

If you turn to such books as Robert de la Sizeranne's *La Peinture Anglaise Contemporaine* (1895),¹ and M. Ernest Chesneau's careful study of *The English School of Painting* (1885), you will see what French eyes and minds have regarded as distinctively English, and why the first thirty years of Queen Victoria's reign (1837-67) are so important to them. Sizeranne has the finer mind, but Chesneau also helps readers to recover old points of view without too much interference from present-day opinions. Further, as we are travelling back into the past, meeting influences sometimes in their growth, sometimes at their culmination, or else at their start, it is precisely these old points of view that we require for our guidance.

When Sizeranne wrote his book, in the early eighteen-nineties, French painters for about fifty years had been growing into Impressionism; that is, they had employed a larger method in which drawing held a minor place, and details were sacrificed to suggestion and amplitude. The influence of this French method had circulated from Paris into Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain, Holland, Belgium, Scandinavia; and American artists looked to

¹ This book was "crowned" by the French Academy.

France for their inspiration. But as soon as Sizeranne visited an International Exhibition he found that one leading people, the British, when judged by their leading artists, had a painting of their own, one of individualists, who yet had qualities which divided their work into English districts and provinces. He was amazed, and also attracted. It seemed to him that a magic ring worn on his finger had transported him to a shore very far off and hitherto unknown. If he drew an æsthetic chart of the world of art, only the British Isles would have a tint of their own ; the other nations would need, in gradations more or less marked, the colour chosen by France, as they were all, in varying degrees, æsthetic colonies won by French innovation. After long and earnest study Sizeranne said to his countrymen : " Let us admire the English painters, but do not let us imitate them." ¹

Two earlier Frenchmen of note had formed a very similar conviction. Th. Silvestre, writing of British art in 1859, found in it *le goût du terroir, l'odeur de la patrie* ; and Th. Gautier used kindred words, *une forte saveur locale qui ne doit rien aux autres écoles*. And what were the qualities that looked so new and so national to these foreign critics ? Let me state them antithetically :

1. Although the British of those days were not only the greatest colonizers in the world but also the most renowned sportsmen and athletes, yet somehow they seemed to care very little for any painter who tried to take them away from a forced vividness of colour which needed fresh air and the greys of atmospheric harmony. " The assaults of realism, of impressionism," said Sizeranne, " broke against their æsthetic like Ney's squadrons against Wellington's squares."

2. Although the English people were very critical in their sports and games towards all points of technical rightness, yet somehow they did not mind when their favourite artists handled paint laboriously, while their leading writers were free and masterly in the handling of words.

3. Although the English people were eminently practical towards a great many things, favouring specialism in trades and professions, yet somehow they appeared to believe that no graphic or pictorial art had an office of its own to serve, but was merely a phase of literature, either illustrative or anecdotal.

4. Although the English people were not emotional like the French,

¹ To see the influence of France, turn to the profusely illustrated catalogue of pictures at the World's Columbian Exhibition, 1893. Among 336 prints there is but one angling subject, an open-air study by a Frenchman, René Gilbert, showing an artisan in a boat bottom-fishing, his intent face screened by a sun-hat.



SALMON FISHING. Painted and Aquatinted by NEWTON FIELDING (1799-1866), who gave painting lessons to the family of Louis Philippe. *From a Rare Proof lent by Messrs. Ellis & Smith.*



SALMON FISHING: REFRESHMENT. Painted and
Aquatinted by **NEWTON FIELDING** (1799-1856). Repro-
duced from a Rare Proof lent by Messrs. Ellis & Smith, London.

yet their pictures and prints were often more sentimental than any work to be found in French exhibitions ; also they seemed to go away from any man of genius who, like Rowlandson, filled his drawings with full-blooded realness.

5. To see the English genius in art at her best, foreigners should make themselves well acquainted with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, which ran counter to everything that foreign schools were doing, and which revealed the underlying poetry, a sort of imaginative literalness, of the English nation.

Now, we cannot say that foreign opinions in those days did not count, for very similar opinions were frequently expressed by British students when they returned home from the Continent ; and written art-criticism in our country became gradually more and more Continental. To-day, as a rule, it takes its cues from abroad.

There is also another reason why the first thirty years of Queen Victoria's reign are peculiarly important in the history of British art. We find in them the death-years not only of Turner and Cotman and Constable, but also of David Cox, James Stark, Peter De Wint, William Müller, Etty, Sir David Wilkie, and a good many others, like Dyce, Danby (after whose family the Slaney fly is named), Eastlake, Stanfield, Chantrey, Andrew Geddes, Witherington, the Pollards, Callcott, J. J. Chalon, Collins, and Sir William Allan.

And now we can look into the various ideas and methods which a few chosen illustrations bring before us.

II

Inskipp is given here for a good many reasons. His picture of " Angling, Old Age and Youth " is certainly too pretty in the coloured lithograph by Giles, who liked angling as keenly as Inskipp. Still, the prettiness, like the general feeling expressed by the composition, belongs to the same moods of taste that placed Collins and Callcott among the big masters, and encouraged Edwin Landseer to sink gradually from his early marvellous promise into boudoir Æsop's fables. Besides, longevity and angling have appeared together so frequently that I wished to show it in a picture, and Inskipp's is the best one that I have yet come upon. And young anglers will be interested by the rod, a bamboo, seemingly of many pieces, like James Pollard's in the oil-painting of " Trolling for Pike in the River Lea, 1831," from Mr. A. N. Gilbey's Collection.

Inskipp exhibited this picture at the British Institution, 1844, under the

title "Veteran of the Angle: The Ruling Passion strong in Death." The catalogue says that it measured 63 in. by 76 in. Between 1821 and 1860 Inskipp was a steady exhibitor at the British Institute. Subjects of interest to anglers :

- 1845. "Pike Fishers," 73 in. by 61 in.
- 1841. "A Fisherman of the Abruzzi Mountains," 36 in. by 32 in.
- 1834. "The Perch Fisher," 33 in. by 27 in.
- 1832. "Hampshire Fisherman," 37 in. by 34 in.
- 1831. "Honest Izaak Walton," 52 in. by 45 in.
- 1828. "A Brother of the Angle," 42 in. by 36 in.

Inskipp was versatile, painting portraits and domestic figure subjects, as well as pictures of interest to fishermen. The Royal Academy, between 1816 and 1841, hung twenty-four of his paintings. Yet his works are very difficult to find. His imaginary portrait of Izaak Walton, exhibited at the Royal Academy, 1831, was engraved ; it is better than Abraham Cooper's ; and it is an easy print to get. Inskipp and Thomas Stothard, R.A., illustrated a rearrangement of *The Compleat Angler*, two thick volumes edited by Sir Harris Nicolas, and brought out by William Pickering, 1836, two years after Stothard's death. Both artists are represented by typical work, delicately engraved by Augustus Fox mainly, assisted here and there by W. J. Cooke, J. G. Armytage, W. J. Wilkinson, and H. Robinson. Seventeen of Stothard's designs are notable, some of the landscapes particularly so, their subjects being well chosen and their treatment simple and broad. They include "The Thatched House at Hoddesden," "The George Inn, Ware," "Pike Pool, near Beresford Hall," "Hanson Toot in Dove Dale, with Alstonefield Church in the Distance," and Beresford Hall itself. Stothard's figure compositions—"The Greeting at Tottenham High Cross," "The Breakfast," "Master and Scholar Angling," "The Milkmaid's Song," "The Sycamore Tree," "The Supper," "The Parting at Tottenham," and "Landing the Grayling"—follow the example set in the eighteenth century as by Samuel Wale, R.A. ; but their style is prettier, daintier ; it has less bone and muscle. As for James Inskipp, his eleven paintings of fish, as engraved by Augustus Fox, are attractive, and should be compared with Philip Audinet's fishes in the 1893 edition of *The Compleat Angler*, partly illustrated by John Linnell, senior, Percy Thomas, and G. E. Lodge. Inskipp has some landscapes also, an imaginary portrait of Izaak Walton, and a copy of Sir Peter Lely's portrait—a full length—of Charles Cotton, seated under a willow tree, right, his angling tools by his side.



ANGLER ON THE BANKS OF THE THAMES IN THE
ETON PLAYING FIELDS. *From a Painting by* RICHARD
JONES of Reading (1767-1840). *The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.*



JACK HALL, FISHERMAN OF ETON. *Engraved by*
R. GRAVES, *after a painting by* EDMUND
BRISTOW (1787-1876). *The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.*

Does anyone know the present whereabouts of Inskipp's original work for *The Compleat Angler*? Some of Stothard's can be traced to a certain date only. Messrs. Christie tell me that six of Stothard's designs passed into the collection of Mr. R. Chambers, a collection sold at their rooms on March 29th, 1859. Stothard's drawings formed Lot 56, and were bought by Mr. B. G. Windus for the small sum of £3 13s. 6d. After Mr. Windus died, in 1868, a sale of his pictures at Christie's did not include the Stothard drawings; but I have heard several times that they were sold privately and went to America. We have reason to regret very much that there has been no Waltonian Society to collect and preserve illustrative drawings inspired by *The Compleat Angler*. Inskipp's have disappeared; so have Samuel Wale's; and I know only one of John Absolon's set, a small oil-painting now in Mr. A. N. Gibbey's Collection.¹

The Editor of *The Connoisseur*, Mr. C. Reginald Grundy, who has aided me in my research, has shown that Inskipp could paint vigorously in rapid oil-studies. He published a plate in colour from a sketch called "The Fisher Boy," fatly—though rather clumsily—handled, cheerful, but conventional in its treatment of open-air lighting. If Franz Hals ever painted with gout in his right hand, he may have made a sketch like this one by Inskipp. The boy has caught a fish weighing about six pounds, so he holds it up at arm's length, and laughs with pride.

We pass on to Abraham Cooper, R.A., a sporting artist, who is still valued highly, above all, in shooting pictures. There are a few prints after his angling adventures, and I have chosen the one that represents him most fully, both as a landscapist and as a painter of Victorian figures. It happens, too, that this composition of young anglers is notable for two reasons more. It enticed another artist, G. Cook, into a plagiarism, which was engraved for an octavo page by J. Cook, and published by Rogerson and Tuxford, 1856. G. Cook composed another and inferior landscape, but copied the two boys and transferred them to the left side of the picture. Next, recall to mind Constable's "The Young Waltonians," and note the difference between his desire to be realistic and Cooper's preference for an arranged composure and graciousness. Constable put his heart with so much zeal

¹ An edition of *The Compleat Angler*, with decorations chosen from all of the artist-illustrators, past and present, would be invaluable. To pass from Samuel Wale, R.A., who died in 1786, to E. H. New and Hugh Thomson, or from Inskipp to Crawhall, D. Y. Cameron, William Strang, and E. J. Sullivan, would be very interesting; and there are many other contrasts, like that between James Thorpe (1911), or H. G. Webb (1905), or L. K. Harlow (1889), and the engravings by Burgh in Moses Browne's first edition (1750).

into bold studies from nature, striving to see grass, water, and trees in their own variable beauty, that he opposed a national collection of old masters, an institution that Cooper looked upon as invaluable. Writing in 1822, Constable said: "Should there be a National Gallery (which is talked of), there will be an end of the art in poor old England, and she will become, in all that relates to painting, as much an unreality as every other country that has one. The reason is plain: the manufacturers of pictures are thus made the criterions of perfection, instead of Nature."¹ This view was not liked by the Royal Academy; and when at last Constable was elected R.A., at the age of fifty-three, President Sir Thomas Lawrence assured him that he was "peculiarly fortunate . . . at a time when there were historical painters of great merit on the list of candidates." To-day Constable is the historical painter of that period; the others have vanished.

One cannot think that Abraham Cooper was proud of his angling pictures, because he did not send them to the Royal Academy. A complete list of his exhibits appears to include only four of special interest to fishermen:

1817. "Fishermen."

1819. "A Celebrated Fly-Fisher."

1861. "On the Banks of Loch Ness."

1867. "Dressing a Fly, a scene in Glen Urquhart, Loch Ness."

At the Royal Academy he was represented by other sporting pictures, and by historical battlepieces.

To *The Old Sporting Magazine* Cooper contributed five fishing subjects:

1824. "Flemish Fishermen," engraved by J. Phelps.

1851. "The Compleat Angler," engraved by J. Scott.

1853. "The Burn," engraved by W. Backshell.

1862. "The Fisherman's Family," engraved by E. Hacker.

1867. "Fashioning a Fly," engraved by E. Hacker.

The New Sporting Magazine:

1828. "The Pike," engraved by A. W. Warren.

1832. "Trout," engraved by W. Raddon.

1832. "Fly-Fishing," engraved by W. R. Smith; also another "Fly-Fishing," 1831, engraved by J. Scott.

1833. "Perch," engraved by A. W. Warren.

1833. "Carp," engraved by A. W. Warren.

¹ Leslie's *Life of Constable*, p. 105.



TROLLING FOR PIKE IN THE RIVER LEA, 1831. *From an Oil
Painting by JAMES POLLARD (1797-after 1859). Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.*

1836. "A Mealfourvonie Trout," engraved by Duncan.

1836. "The Common and the Brandling Trout," engraved by J. W. Archer.

1840. "Bull Trout," engraved by J. Outrim.¹

And now we pass on to James Pollard.

III

Pollard's natural gifts were good, and also versatile, but imperfectly educated; so a great deal of injustice has been done to their value in the history of sporting art. Pollard is omitted both from the most recent edition of Bryan's *Dictionary of Painters and Engravers* and also from the *Dictionary of National Biography*. One cause of this cold-shouldering helps to confirm an old proverb—that excessive praise from one set of persons offends another set, and stirs up hostility towards the work that has been too much belauded. Pollard has been rated at far too high a value by collectors of sporting prints, with the result that experts of art have reacted, omitting him from books of reference. Even at the Sports Exhibition of 1890 only one James Pollard was accepted, "The St. Leger, 1836"; and angling was rebuffed in other ways, only eighteen fishing pictures by fifteen artists being represented: Morland's "Fishing Party," and "The Perch Fisher"; Erskine Nicol's "Steady, Johnnie, Steady"; Edwin Landseer's "Otter and Salmon"; James Bateman's "Trout and Fishing Tackle"; three routine pieces of natural history by H. L. Rolfe; J. C. Hook's "Fishing by Proxy"; John Pettie's "Fly-Fishing"; Dendy Sadler's "A Pegged-Down Fishing Match," later engraved for Mr. Mendoza; Fred Walker's "Boy Fishing"; a G. E. Lodge; a T. G. Targett; H. K. Browne's "The Patient Angler"; a "Salmon Fishing" by Charles Whymper; a study of trout by Abraham Cooper, and one of grayling by W. Smith. Nothing more! Since then James Pollard's angling subjects have defeated Rolfe's, Cooper's, Whymper's, W. Smith's, T. G. Targett's, and G. E. Lodge's; and as they have been made well known by modern reprints, if not by the costly original issues, they are represented in this book by reproductions from three oil-paintings.

Mr. A. N. Gilbey, like his father Sir Walter, does justice to James Pollard by reminding us that a painter's influence, historically, is often a thing apart

¹ See also *The Fly-Fisher's Text Book*, 1841, by "Theophilus South," where Abraham Cooper is represented by "Wading the Trout Stream," engraved by J. R. Scott. There is also an angler's study of the period, drawn and engraved by J. W. Archer.

from his technical merit ; and certainly James Pollard, more than any other painter of his time, is admired to-day by collectors of angling prints. His pictures are sold at considerably lower prices than original proofs in colour after his designs. One day the late Sir William Orchardson was shown by a friend a Pollard oil-painting, and his goodwill, in a struggle with candour, said evasively, " Oh—ah—hum ! " But it was not the picture of " Trolling for Pike," whose qualities translate very well into prints.

Does anyone believe that James Pollard won his way through a life-class, painting life-size figures from the nude, and studies from draped models ? He is not a good painter ; but in his best work he holds his pictures together, has an expressiveness of his own, and shows that he knows coaching and sports intimately. Though he took holidays with his rod, and continued to fish to the age of sixty-two, his known angling pictures and prints are few in number ; they could have been done in three or four months of his busy life. This fact implies that his angling ideas had not the popularity of his other enterprises, coaching frequently, racing, hunting, coursing, steeple-chasing, and much else, like his " Fairlop Fair," and the " Ad Montem Procession at Eton," and his picture of Smithfield Market. Briefly, then, he was a topical journalist of sport who worked with brush and pencil, striving always to give a general character of realness, and succeeding often, not always unaided, as by good engravers.

Pollard was born in 1797, at Braynes Row, Spa Fields, London. His father, Robert Pollard, was a designer and engraver of note, a Newcastle man who came to London in 1782, at the age of twenty-seven. We shall meet him in the next chapter. As an artist, both draughtsman and composer, he was superior to his son James ; and to me it is likely that he retouched a good deal of James's work.¹ Robert studied under Richard Wilson, R.A., a fine master, and for a time he painted landscapes and sea pieces. James, then, was cradled in art, so to speak, and his defective training implies that he was impatiently clever as a boy, too restless and too ambitious to bear the hard and slow drudgery that landscape and figure painting require, particularly when they are united to animal painting also. Exhibitions were not kind to him. The British Institute accepted only three of his pictures,

¹ If James was not aided by his father, like the junior David Cox by the senior, certain facts in his work become troublesome. Thus " The Fishmonger's Shop," finely aquatinted by Dubourg in 1822, and inscribed to James Pollard, has better qualities than his first angling pictures, painted nine years later. David Cox used to say that he had " looked over " his son's water-colours, and I believe that Robert Pollard looked over the four drawings of London shops that his son sketched in at the age of twenty-four.



ANGLER GAFFING A PIKE: Waltham Abbey in the distance. *An Oil Painting by JAMES POLLARD (1797-after 1859). The A. N. Gilbey Collection.*



TROUT FISHING AT BEDDINGTON CORNER, SURREY. *An Oil Painting by JAMES POLLARD (1797-after 1859). Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.*

and Suffolk Street only four, and the R.A. only five. His contributions to the R.A. were :

1839. Two domestic pictures, "Motherly Protection" and "Maternal Anxiety."

1824. "Two Incidents of Mail-Coach Travelling."

1821. "North Country Mail at the Peacock, Islington."

Oddly enough, too, James Pollard received very little help from editors, his name appearing only twice in *The Old Sporting Magazine*—1849, "Pike Fishing," engraved by H. Beckwith ; and 1859, "The Mill Ford," engraved by James Westley.

The late Sir Walter Gilbey, in Vol. II. of *Animal Painters*, relates the story of Pollard's famous angling prints :

"His 'Fly-Fishing' and 'Trolling for Pike' are scenes on the River Lea (size of canvas $17 \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ inches), and were painted in 1831. His signature is affixed to each of these works, which were engraved by P. Himely. . . .

"Pollard is better known by the engravings from his works than by his pictures themselves. This is natural enough in view of the great popularity of the subjects upon which his brush was employed. Several of these engravings were published in connection with his father and brother, who carried on their business in Holloway, the style of the Firm being R. Pollard & Son. . . .

"Besides the engravings already referred to, the following deserve mention :—

"'Pike Fishing' and 'The Mill Ford.' The latter shows anglers at the tail of a mill-race, one in the act of landing a fish. These engravings were executed by H. Beckwith, and impressions appear in the *Sporting Magazine* for 1849 and 1859.

"Four Engravings printed in colours : (1) 'Fly-Fishing' ; (2) 'Bottom-Fishing' ; (3) 'Trolling for Pike' ; and (4) 'Anglers Packing Up.' These engravings were published by T. Helme, 'at his picture-frame manufactory, 15 Tabernacle Square, Old Street Road, London,' and bear date November 17th, 1831."

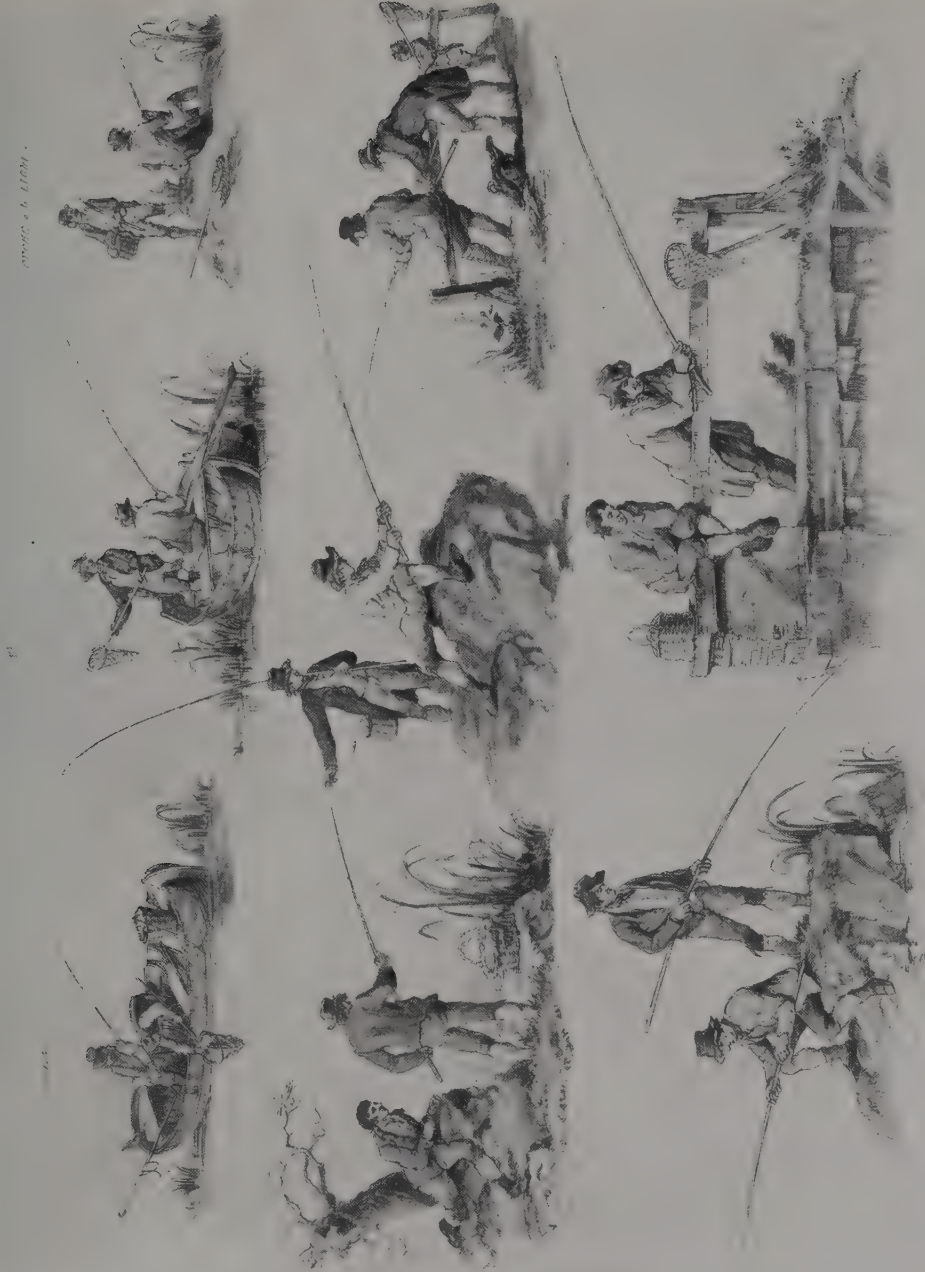
Either the editions were tiny, or buyers were very careless, for old Pollard angling prints come into the market only from time to time. I know two collectors who wait year after year for a good impression of the "Fly-Fishing." Meantime one of them has a modern reprint, effective as a Pollard decoration for an entrance hall.

Has anyone yet discovered the date of the painter's death ? So far as I know, he disappears from view in 1859, with a rod in his hand, a happy angler of sixty-two.

It is necessary to set him side by side with several fellow-artists, minor painters also, who helped to hand on the association of angling with landscape pictures. George Armfield's "On the Wye," engraved by James Westley, and dated 1855, has a fisherman of the period, a rather uneasy figure in a tall grey hat, white ducks, and a semi-frockcoat. H. Beckwith, in a pleasant effect of woodland angling, drawn and engraved by himself in 1854, allies his work with the Academic school of William Collins, William F. Witherington, and Thomas Creswick. W. H. Pyne, a man of uncommon gifts, author, critic, painter, and social observer, who died in 1843, did not forget freshwater fishing, as I show in a very clever page of hints given by him to landscape painters. He was a worker in water-colours, and note that his figure drawing has the quality known as weight of style. There are many artists who have not a trace of this quality. In their art clouds and rocks are equally heavy, or equally unsubstantial; they would show no difference in weight avoirdupois between a baby and a battleship. Other artists, attracted by the differences between varying heaviness and varying lightness, decline to see the world as a many-hued fantasy. W. H. Pyne is one of these realists, and Rowlandson is another. Look at these fishermen by Pyne. They belong to that peasantry that supplied Wellington with thin red lines and unbreakable squares. Pyne understood the English people, and his *Microcosm of Great Britain*, completed in 1806, like *The Costume of Great Britain*, 1808, is invaluable to students of period history.

As contrasts we have the styles of William Barraud, Newton Fielding, Richard Jones, and Edmund Bristow; of William Heath, and Edward Williams, and James Bateman, whom a Frenchman has called Landseer le Petit. These men are all minor instruments in an orchestra of period art; not one of them is to be called a specialist angling painter, because their fishing put only an occasional subject into their work.

William Barraud (1810-1850), who studied under Abraham Cooper, died prematurely; so did Bateman (1814-1849), and William Heath (1795-1840); thus the word "minor" is not in their case a criticism. William Barraud wished to prove that he could learn to paint sporting pictures which would be accepted by artists as well as by sportsmen, though he knew, of course, that rival specialists rarely agree. His methods were those of the Landseer-Herring tradition, like James Bateman's; that is, he feared opaque colour handled with a full and swift modelling brush, and endeavoured to keep throughout his work a translucency which had a charm of its own, but which never suggested nature's profusion of atmospheric greys in many



ANGLING STUDIES. Drawn and Etched by WILLIAM HENRY PYNE (1769-1843). Reproduced from a Print lent by W. T. Spencer.



THREE ANGLERS AT THE BEND OF A STREAM.
An Oil Painting signed Jas. Pollard, but the style is unlike
Pollard's, and a portion of this picture was engraved as
WILLIAM BARRAUD (1810-1850). The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.

hues.¹ Think of this overdone fondness for transparent pigments side by side with Mr. J. S. Sargent's masterpiece of angling, with its wonderful daylight brilliance free from the old artifice of lustrous golden syrup and brown. Here is a revolution not only in the whole technique of art, but also in those gifts of spirit which, in accordance with the differing education they receive, have altered periodically the world's perception of art and Nature. When artists and their patrons said, "Let us do justice to the rich translucency that many Old Masters keep before us," they had no desire to say, "Let us see the reflected colours that leaves and things receive from a sunny sky; and let us put depth of atmosphere into our work by striving to get the veiling and exquisite hues of grey that Nature keeps around her most luminous effects." Sir George Beaumont, a dictator of art-criticism when Constable began to paint open-air freshness, and the sky's reflections on wet leaves and grasses, said protestingly, "This is all very well, but where is your brown tree?" Similarly, Joshua Reynolds was told as a young man that his perception of new relations between human figures and their surroundings would not do, because it was refuted by the practice of Sir Peter Lely. Evolution creeps, and the custom-ridden try to bring it to a standstill.

Neither William Barraud nor James Bateman took hints from Constable. Landseer was their ideal, and, curiously, the only angling picture known to me that is connected with Barraud's name is controversial.² It bears the signature "Jas. Pollard," but it has neither Pollard's figures nor Pollard's colours and touch. When I saw it for the first time, before it passed into the collection of Mr. A. N. Gilbey, its landscape set me thinking of David Cox's first efforts in oil-colour, before William Müller gave him some first-rate advice. But although the landscape has the colour and the touching of Cox's first period in oils, the figures are unlike his, completely unlike, for Cox has an impressionism of his own when he adds figures and animals to a composition. His "Peace and War" and his "Welsh Funeral," for example, are to his own day what Charles Cottet's Breton pictures have been to later times.

One day Mr. A. N. Gilbey found among his prints a small engraving that represents the left-hand portion of this picture; a faithful engraving, with William Barraud's name as the painter. Engravers, of course, like art-editors, have made mistakes, as when Charles Towne's picture of badger-hunting with bulldogs was given to Nelson; but at present Barraud's right

¹ Now and then James Pollard tried the transparent method. Mr. A. N. Gilbey has a good example, a small picture called "Trout Fishing at Beddington Corner."

² There is a print of a "Punt Fishing" after W. Barraud, but the original picture cannot be found.

to this picture cannot be questioned, though its landscape has not his usual colour and touch. Historically the work is valuable to my subject, for it shows a genuine wish to raise the old transparent method into a lighter key and a natural atmosphere. The reproduction has failed to give the right quality of hue in the yellow block ; indeed, the yellow block is generally a troublesome thing, producing effects which are too chromic, and therefore too shrill.

If you compare this William Barraud with the " Perch Fishing " by Edward Williams, who continues to follow the old Dutch landscapists, you will see at a glance that the perception of colour out of doors has more yellow in it and considerably less of transparent brownish tints. Yellow became Turner's favourite colour, but he grew into it through old-time browns such as we find in his diploma picture at the Royal Academy. As soon as he passed into sun-worship, a Zoroaster of imaginative realism, Turner began to make protean experiments with yellow, forgetting that fugitive yellows do not return like sunrises and sunsets. It is a fatality of art, as great old tapestries bear witness, that light and bright yellows are generally mortal, losing their " lemon " hues, and fading into brownish yellow.

Though Edward Williams's " Perch Fishing " comes through Dutch masters to an English waterside, it is a good work of its rank ; and note how freely and lightly the rod and line are suggested, like the angler's figure. Here and there the line is " lost " against the background of cornfield and trees, and yet we feel that it is tightly strained everywhere. Well, nothing has struck me more during my researches than the frequent difficulty with which artists have handled rods and lines with their chosen fine brushes.

Williams must have been a young man of character, for he chose his method of work after testing three experiences of a very opposite sort. His father, another Edward Williams, was an engraver, who married the sister of a very ambitious and masterful artist, James Ward, R.A. ; from childhood, then, he was " in the swim " of the artistic movement. Ward passed over the Dutch landscapists, and competed with hearty enjoyment against country scenes painted by Rubens. For a time the boy studied under Ward, whose lessons must have been like gusts of wind in October ; and the next fact recorded is that young Williams, instead of becoming his uncle's disciple, turned to a business handicraft, and articulated himself to a carver and gilder ! The routine of this work renewed his enthusiasm for painting ; he tried his brush at some moonlight effects, and sold them, so he turned to art as a profession. So far as we know, he never thought of National Service,



PERCH FISHING. *An Oil Painting (28in. x 23in.) by E. WILLIAMS (1782 - 1855). Reproduced by permission of Messrs. Ackermann.*



TROUT FISHING. *An Oil Painting by JAMES BATEMAN (1814-1849). At the Sports Exhibition of 1890-91 Bateman was represented by a picture of Trout and Fishing Tackle. Arthur N. Gilby Collection.*



A TROUT STREAM, with a Fly-Fisher in the Middle Distance. *An Oil Painting by JAMES STARK (1794-1859). By permission of Arthur Tooth & Sons.*

for Napoleon's final defeat and young Williams' second success at the Royal Academy occurred in the same year. Much later in life he fell in love with the Thames, painting many pictures of its delightful scenery. He died at Barnes, June 24th, 1855, aged seventy-three, leaving six sons who were artists. Three of them had changed their names to Boddington, risking a compromise in family competition.

James Bateman, like Edward Williams, was a Londoner by birth, but his boyhood was passed among tradesmen, his father being a fish dealer in Billingsgate and Leadenhall Markets. At first he was placed with a painter on glass; then he became a clerk, and a clerk he remained till 1837, his twenty-third year, when two gentlemen, after seeing the sketches and pictures that he turned out during his leisure time, volunteered to pay a hundred pounds for all that he could paint in a year. It is to be assumed that this princely offer was to be an addition to his weekly wage as a clerk, for James, in the previous year, had married, giving a hostage to fortune. In any case, the offer was accepted, and it turned him into a professional painter. It has been said that he was entirely self-taught, but this cannot be true, for he worked sometimes in Landseer's studio, and Landseer admired and also aided a genius very akin to his own, as when he painted a Newfoundland dog swimming in a riverscape which Bateman had painted. Bateman had gone out to borrow a dog as a model, and while he was away Landseer put in what was needed from memory. He was helped by the Napier family, who supplied him with sketches from which he made some pictures of Indian sport.

Bateman was only thirty-five when he died of consumption, leaving an output of sincere and genially versatile work that is very surprising. Very often he is too pretty, like Burton Barber; but he has humour, swift and sure observation, and the presence of forty-five plates after his pictures in the *Old Sporting Magazine* shows that he knew how to amuse his countrymen. I have seen only three angling studies by him, and one of them, from Mr. A. N. Gilbey's Collection, is reproduced here. It shows that Bateman could break away from prettiness when he liked, sketching out of doors with a full and fat brush, and enjoying the free use of pigment. The first business of an oil-painter is to paint, not to tickle a canvas with thin colour, and later with glazes. Bateman's "Trout Fishing" is painted; and only a few artists have dared to show a fisherman with his back towards us. The fish and the creel are handled bravely, and the relation between the angler and the sky is correct. Are the fish somewhat too large?

Edmund Bristow is another interesting minor painter. According to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, "his works, feeble in technique and little known, are scattered about in private galleries, some being in the Royal Collection at Windsor." No doubt a great deal of his technique could be defeated now by scores of young men and women; but students of English art cannot pass over him, and hence the D.N.B. has not forgotten him, as its art advisers forgot James Pollard. I represent him from a good print engraved by R. Graves, in a portrait of Jack Hall, fisherman of Eton College; a portrait full of character, with a background that will interest all Etonians. There is also a good Bristow painting of "Jack Hall's Fishing Party," which Messrs. Agnew have allowed me to reproduce; it shows that the Duke of Clarence (afterwards William IV) gave his encouragement to a clever man. The Princess Elizabeth was another patron, but Bristow was too independent, and also too eccentric, to swim with a lifebelt. Like Morland, working to order annoyed him, and sometimes, unlike Morland, after he regarded a picture as finished, he declined to sell what he had done. Born at Windsor on April Fool's Day, 1787, he lived the whole of his life at Windsor and Eton, sketching the local men of note, turning from still life to domestic pieces, and from landscapes to sporting subjects and pictures of monkeys. Like Francis Barlow and Edwin Landseer, he signed his name to a "Cat's Paw," and his "Monkey Pugilists" attracted much attention. Recently in New Oxford Street I saw one of his few angling pictures, two picturesque lads and a shaggy terrier, dated 1844, with a fresh and attractive sky, but clumsy in other parts. Yet the general impression had character, individuality, a style of its own. If Bateman had been born in Antwerp at the beginning of the seventeenth century, he might have rivalled Adrian Brauwer, who arrived there about 1631. What Bateman needed was the companionship of artists, all engaged in the development of a great school.

And this applies also to Richard Jones, of Reading, who lived from 1767 to 1840, and who passed the whole of his life among narrow and cramping ideas and conditions. With no stir of generative art around him, he worked bravely, showing in his work that he was an "all-round" sportsman. Charles Turner engraved in mezzotint four of his pictures for Ackermann, and to live on with Charles Turner is to be fortunate.

Mr. A. N. Gilbey has chosen for his collection a very typical oil-picture by Richard Jones, painted about 1820, and showing a fisherman and his dog on the banks of the Thames, in the Eton playing fields, with Windsor Castle in the hazy distance. Though animals as a rule were this painter's favourite



JACK HALL'S FISHING PARTY. From an Oil Painting by
EDMUND BRISTOW (1787-1876). By permission of Messrs. Agnew.

models, the dog in this portraiture is inferior to the landscape and also to the angler, whose prim and puffy little figure would have amused Charles Dickens.

Then there are William Heath and Newton Fielding. To me their few angling prints are comedies unintended, but they are among the varieties that collectors have valued. Fielding's prints are notable as translucent and "sweet" aquatints; they show that public taste had gone away from the manlier aquatinting of Paul Sanby, R.A., preferring daintiness to texture and character. The costumes, too, in Fielding's compositions are notable, bright enough in contrasts of colour to scare every salmon in the river. Or was Newton Fielding the inventor of a colour camouflage for salmon-fishers? He wrote some diligent books, and one of them was *A Dictionary of Colour, containing Seven Hundred and Fifty Tints, to which is prefixed a Grammar of Colour*. This book was published in 1854, two years before he died in Paris, aged fifty-seven. A print after his work is called "Eel Fishing near Maintenon, 1834."

In Paris, where he lived for a good many years, he was liked and esteemed, teaching the family of Louis-Philippe, and receiving much other support. This fact contrasts oddly with the figure drawing of Newton Fielding's salmon-fishing prints. Note the seated fat man, a Falstaff of the rod and line, whose brown trousers are transparent enough to show the muscles, which are made as emphatic as muscles are in a nude figure by Michelangelo.

For the rest, Newton Fielding belonged to a famous family, his brothers being Copley Fielding, and Thales, and Theodore. His father also, Nathan Theodore, was an artist, who made a name among Yorkshire and Lancashire families by painting portraits of aged people in the minutely detailed style of Denner. Newton etched, painted in water-colour, engraved, and studied lithography with original care and skill.

William Heath was another student of lithography, choosing a style which, in his print of Scottish angling, is far and away too spick and span, a fault to be found also in angling prints after Charles Landseer, R.A., by Louis Haghe, P.R.I.¹ Heath's kilted sportsmen have never been blown upon by wind, nor drenched by rain and mist. Yet his sketches of wild sports in Scotland were made on the Island of Islay, and on other islands of the Inner Hebrides. From these sketches he drew on stone, forming a set

¹ See William Scrope's *Days and Nights of Salmon Fishing*, 1843. This entertaining book has also a typical fishing print by Edward Cooke: "What Eyes he has!" Presumably Edward W. Cooke, R.A. (1811-1880). Another useful book of the eighteen-forties, *The Fly Fisher's Text Book*, by "Theophilus South" (i.e. Edward Chitty), 1841.

of prints which have become uncommon, and which include otter-hunting and stag-hunting, both with much action in them. Students of angling should turn from William Heath to William Simson, R.S.A. (1800-1847), a gifted man whose "Burning the Water" is a picture to be found somewhere, and whose "Twelfth of August" hangs as a period shooting picture in the National Gallery of Scotland.

There is another Heath, Henry Heath, junior, who published a good many minor angling prints, which look like pictorial advertisements, such as "Barbel Fishing at Twickenham," "Roach Fishing at Broxbourne," "Perch Fishing at Teddington," "Jack Fishing at Lea Bridge," etc.;¹ and a third Heath, James, A.R.A., engraved an idyllic angling after Richard Westall, R.A. (1765-1836), whose daintiness at times looks fit for a convalescent home in fairyland. In this print a handsome boy lies prone in a glade, and angles with delicate futility, his head resting on his left hand. Heath engraved a similar composition after Richard Corbould; a graceful young man of fashion is seated affectedly on a bank, right, slippered feet resting on a stone; he pretends to angle while a companion, with a book in hand, prattles about the roses and raptures of a tamed Cupid.

This phase of my subject, a pretty prattling boudoir idealism, comes from several Academicians, who wished to be as far off from Nature as were Pope's feigned lamentations over the death of Mrs. Tempest:

"Her fate is whispered by the gentle breeze
And told in sighs to all the trembling trees;
The trembling trees, in every plain and wood,
Her fate remurmur to the silver flood;
The silver flood, so lately calm, appears
Swelled with new passion, and o'erflows with tears;
The winds and trees and floods her death deplore—
Daphne, our grief! our glory now no more!"

An earlier poet, Quarles, in an effort to be anti-natural, wrote:

"My passion has no April in her eyes:
I cannot spend in mists; I cannot mizzle;
My fluent brains are too severe to drizzle
Slight drops . . ."

That a race of sportsmen and sea-adventurers should have liked this languishing twaddle not in verse only, but also in prints and pictures, is a reminder that taste and judgment often display even the shallowest whims

¹ The late D. B. Fearing catalogued a folio with five plates, *Angling Reminiscences*, by H. Heath, junior. London. Baily Bros. About 1850.



LANDED! *After ABRAHAM COOPER, R.A.*
(1787-1868). *From a print lent by General Cowie.*



FISHING FROM A RUSTIC BRIDGE. *From a Sepia Drawing*
by JOHN BERNAY CROME (1793-1842). *The John Lane Collection.*

imposed upon them by irrational fashions. And we must note, too, that the Royal Academy, throughout the whole of Turner's life, set itself to earn money as a self-supporting institution by befriending the pretty-pretty and the pseudo-historical. Turner himself painted some pictures which look almost like advertisement compositions, in order to keep his name before the people, and to save himself from that drudgery of teaching amateur pupils which wasted the time and genius of David Cox, and Peter De Wint, of Old Crome, and John Sell Cotman.

Many provincial painters, such as Richard Jones, Edward Williams, John Syer, the two Shayers, and J. W. Giles, R.S.A., were free from the Royal Academy's dominating sway; and for this reason alone they are interesting to students of angling in art. Giles, one of the keenest artist anglers in Scottish art, painted a good many pictures of fish and fishing. I have advertised for them in vain. He is found in some prints, but not by first-rate interpreters. A good many other painters could be named, but we must pass on to a few masters who appear in this chapter, or who belong to its period.

IV

We start with the great Norwich School, which, unlike its Liverpool rival, has had justice done to it many a time. Its founder, John Crome (1769-1821), the son of a Norwich weaver, began to earn his bread by doing errands for a doctor; then he was apprenticed to a coach and sign painter. Some one in the neighbourhood showed the boy a number of Dutch and Flemish painters. Crome studied them lovingly, and was drawn particularly towards the Dutch landscapes, those by Hobbema delighting him most of all. His genius awakened, and Crome, being thoroughly cautious as well as receptively great, made up his mind to regard teaching as a hard profession and painting as a delightful hobby. His pupils must have become numerous, for his rounds at one period kept two horses busy. That he remained homely and humble as a man is proved by the fact that this painter of genius, at the age of thirty-four, accepted five shillings for "writing and gilding ye Maid's Head," and a guinea for "painting ye Lane Dog." He attracts us like David Cox, this very simple great heart, for Cox, a blacksmith's son, had the same modesty, added to a style of his own, which, in its best work, looks modern to-day. Crome, with all his depth of unsought poetry, and his emotional fondness for subtle paint and rich luminous colour, is one of the classics who mark a style and a period; while Cox grew from phase to

phase till he startled his fellow-painters in water-colour by being far in advance of his own day. Also from youth to old age he was unconscious of the fact that he was one of art's innovators. Though he lived to be seventy-six, Cox never received £100 for a picture; and only thirteen years after his death, in 1872, at the famous Joseph Gillott sale, two of his oil-paintings fetched nearly £6000! Both he and Old Crome have been wondrously kind to buyers and sellers, amateur and professional.

Cox was always attracted by child anglers, and now and then he painted an active fly-fishing, as in the example which I have chosen, and which is like a back-view portrait of himself. Yet, somehow, he has been passed over by collectors of angling pictures, like Peter De Wint, who put incidental anglers into some of his best water-colours—"On the Dart," for instance, and "Canterbury Meadows," and "Cliefden from Maidenhead Bridge."¹ As for Old Crome, a fishing landscape in the Bury Art Gallery is attributed to him, a Norfolk scene, with a man angling from a rustic bridge, behind a small knoll, in front of some thatched farm buildings.

Fishing and a rustic bridge appear also in an early drawing by his eldest son, John B. Crome, a landscapist of repute, who died in 1842, aged forty-nine. On the very day of his death Old Crome said to this son: "John, my boy, paint, but paint for fame; and if your subject is only a pig-sty, dignify it." At the last, even when his mind was wandering, the ruling passion of his life continued to use a brush. "He put his hands out of bed and made motions as if painting, and said, 'There—there—there's a touch; that will do; now another—that's it, beautiful!'"²

With his love of water and his wonderful observation, Crome cannot have failed to note many times the varied interest given to landscapes by incidental anglers; and yet the oil-painting at Bury is the only one I can find that connects his name with my subject.

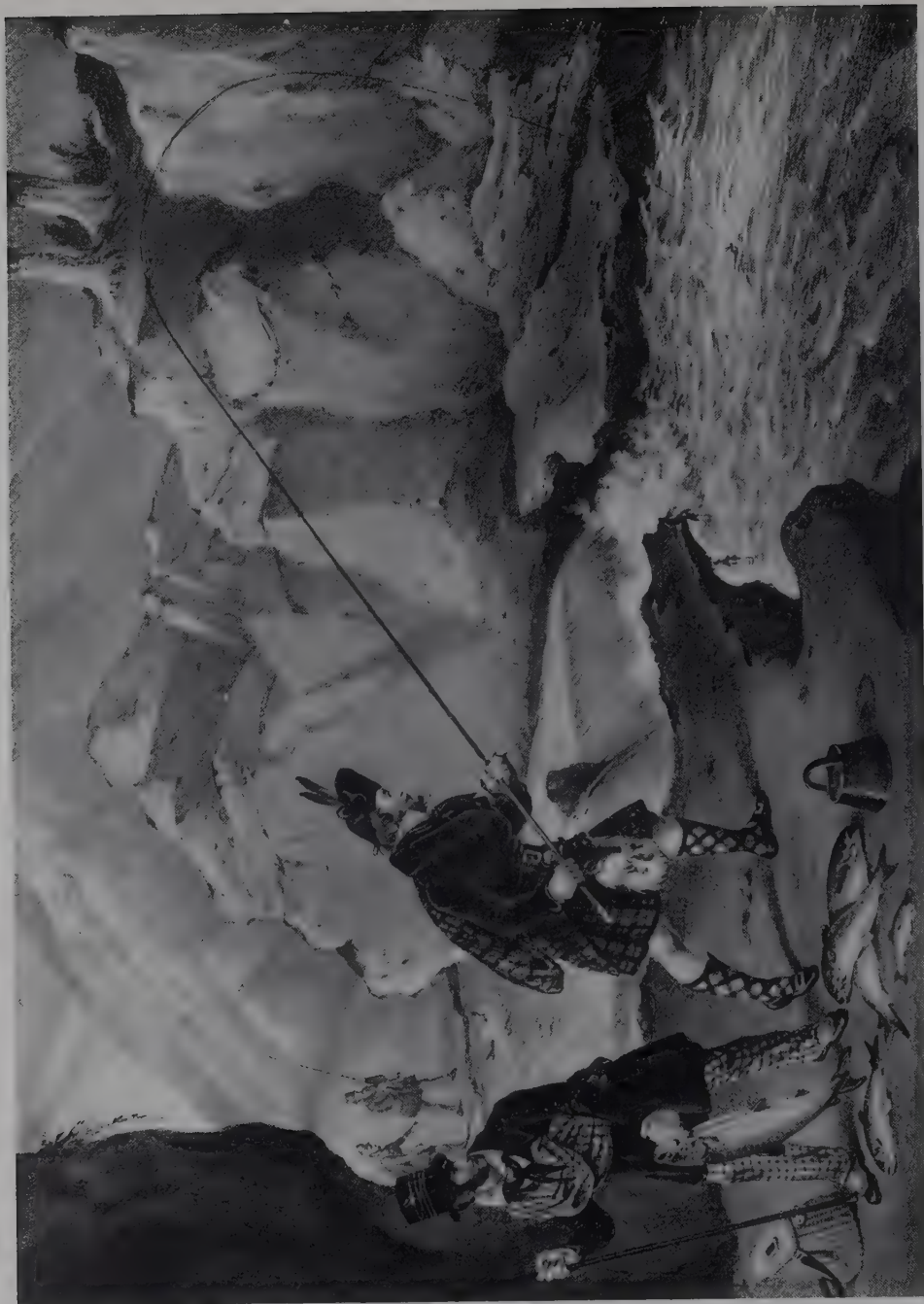
On the other hand, thanks to Mr. Arthur Tooth, I am able to reproduce two anglings by James Stark, who was articled to Old Crome for three years, and whose earlier works, produced under the immediate influence of his master, are much better generally than his later style, in which, from about 1840, he painted river scenery and woodlands around Windsor. There is a letter from Old Crome to Stark, written in 1816, which enables us to take a lesson from the founder of a school. It says that "trifles in nature must be overlooked that we may have our feelings raised by seeing the whole picture

¹ See the photogravures in Walter Armstrong's *Memoir of Peter De Wint*, Macmillan, 1888. De Wint needs colour-reproduction, and I have been unable to get a picture for this process.

² Wodderspoon's *J. Crome and His Works*, 1876.



POSTWICK GROVE ON THE YARE, with Two Anglers in a Boat. *From an Oil Painting by JAMES STARK (1794 - 1859). By permission of Arthur Tooth & Sons Ltd.*



FISHING IN THE ISLE OF ISLAY. From an original Lithograph
by WILLIAM HEATH (1796-1840). From a rare proof lent by J. Kinell.
See pages 109 and 110.



LANDSCAPE SCENE IN NORFOLK, with a Peasant Fishing from a Rustic Bridge. On Canvas 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. x 40in. JOHN CROME, 1769-1821. From the Thomas Wrigley Collection in the Art Gallery, Bury.

of [at] a glance, not knowing how or why we are so charmed." Stark has painted a sky which his master dislikes, and the letter says :

"I cannot let your sky go by, without some observation. I think the character of your clouds too affected, that is, too much of the character of some of our modern painters, who mistake some of our great masters." In what way? Crome is ambiguous; words come to him with difficulty; he needs a brush or a piece of chalk to illustrate what he means. He says :

"because they [the great masters] sometimes put in some of those round characters [*i.e.* clouds in this case], they [*i.e.* some of the modern painters] must do the same; but if you look at any of their [the great masters'] skies, they [*i.e.* the skies] either assist in the composition, or make some figure in the picture, nay, sometimes play the first fiddle. I have seen this in Wouwerman, and many others I could mention. . . ."

Stark's picture, we may be sure, looked fussy to Crome's eye; it needed poise and breadth. But Crome's criticism may have been wrong because he disliked the modernism of 1816, the year of Turner's "The Temple of Jupiter Panhellenius restored." Between 1807 and 1815 Turner had exhibited at the R.A. his "Hannibal crossing the Alps," his "Frosty Morning," "The Deluge," "Bligh Sand, near Sheerness: Fishing-boats trawling," "Crossing the Brook," the inimitable "Trout Stream," "Dido building Carthage," "The Passage of Mount St. Gothard," and other familiar works, like "The Sun rising through Vapour—Fishermen cleaning and selling Fish," and "The Eruption of the Soufrière Mountain," now in the Pandeli Ralli Collection. All this, at the time when Crome wrote, was one marvellously varied phase of modernism; and there was Constable who became A.R.A. a few years later, 1819. But rival creeds never agree; and Old Crome probably knew that Stark needed the discipline of tested tradition, because he was born to obey authority, not to invite obedience from those who resented any departure from custom. And in this matter Stark was not unfortunate, like his great superior and fellow townsman, John Sell Cotman, whose innovating genius was marvellous, and whose life was a martyrdom. Stark at his best is a little Old Crome, but with a fondness of his own for trees, while Cotman brought into art an enchanted newness, wondrously sensitive and synthetic, with a subtlety of design which is often much finer in black-and-white drawings than in water-colours and a few oils. His drawings and sketches were done for his own consolation in the midst of bitter humiliations, while his later water-colours, with their

amber tints and their blues, were often an attempt to ease money-troubles by complying with the needs of popular markets.

A few months ago a distinguished critic tried to analyse Cotman's original mastery of elusive design, failing to see that he would have occupied his time as ineptly by pulling the feathers from beautiful birds in order to understand the harmonious beauty of their combinations of colour and pattern. The best interpretation of Cotman's genius has come from Laurence Binyon, a writer on art who is also a beautiful poet, and a leading authority on Chinese and Japanese design, with its alembication of life and form and colour. Before he was twenty-five Cotman had attained a simplification which belonged to his own perception of Nature's beauty, united to a very thoughtful recognition of the limits within which brushes and pigments could be handled with a lyrical feeling for his art. He was only twenty-three when he finished his "Greta Bridge," recognized to this day as one of the finest works in the history of English water-colour; and this masterpiece, in 1836, six years before Cotman's death, was sold at Christie's for eight shillings! Two years earlier, in a sale at Norwich, none of his oil-colours fetched more than five pounds. Norwich, then, has had much to atone for; and she has done her best, when too late, to be fair to herself by being reasonable towards her greatest son.

In 1834 Cotman turned his back on his native city, and came to London, on being appointed drawing master to King's College School. Five years earlier he wrote as follows to a friend:—

"My views in life are so completely blasted, that I sink under the repeated and constant exertion of body and mind. Every effort has been tried even without the hope of success; hence that loss of spirits amounting almost to despair.

"My eldest son, who is following the same miserable profession with myself, feels the same hopelessness; and his powers, once so promising, are evidently paralysed, and his health and spirits gone. My amiable and deserving wife bears her part with fortitude. But the worm is there. My children cannot but feel the contagion. As a husband and father bound by every tie, human and divine, to cherish and protect them, I leave you to suppose how impossible it must be for me to feel one joy divided from them. I watch them, and they me, narrowly; and I see enough to make me broken-hearted."

The good Dawson Turner brought some gleams of sunshine into this great man's life, as when he took Cotman to Normandy, to do a book of fine etchings on architectural antiquities. Many an architect knows the



EVENING: BOYS SELL FISH. *From an Oil Painting*
by JOHN SELL COTMAN (1782-1842). *Repro-*
duced by permission of Russell Colman, Esq., of Norwich.

high value of Cotman's prints and proofs, but collectors have not yet gambled over them ; and as to Cotman's *Liber Studiorum*, with forty-eight beautiful soft-ground etchings, it is still at times a book for connoisseurs who feel that their banking accounts are half-visionary. Several of the prints, as Mr. H. T. Sheringham has noted, may be called angling prints without fishermen ; notably No. 4, "On the Yare, Norfolk" ; and No. 14, Tan-y-Bwlch, Merionethshire, North Wales." One beautiful rich impression, "Millbank on the Thames," is a most amazing piece of landscape history when we think of what Millbank is to-day.

For a long time it was Cotman's lot to be better known by pictures which have been attributed to him erroneously, than by his own various productions. At one time even our National Gallery dared to impose on him a large painting which had nothing whatever to do with the Norwich masters. J. J. Chalon might have painted it when enfeebled after a bad illness. To see Cotman at his best in black-and-white and also in some choice water-colour, students should visit the Print Room at the British Museum. One drawing, brush and Indian ink on grey paper, with a few touches of colour, is a lyric of dewy evening with two boys fishing from a wall ; soothingly impressive, and one of Cotman's favourites, for he tried to transfer its composition and its atmosphere into an oil-painting, now treasured in the Colman Collection. There are Cotmanites who prefer the drawing, but we are fortunate indeed to have both. As a rule I like Cotman best when no thought of a market came between him and his marvellous originality. There are two little oils in the Museum at Norwich which are as perfect as the most inspired of his drawings. About a year ago I studied them with Mr. A. J. Munnings, and this modernist master was charmed by their design, and also by the subtleties of their technique. Cotman was a tree-worshipper, and the contrast between the wind-stirred airiness of their leaves and the general weight of their bulk charmed his imagination, and caused him to think of a textured surface of oil-paint which would suggest even in small pictures those reflections of the sky on trembling leaves which are often silvery in midday sunlight and a magic alloy of gold at sunset.

Cotman's second son, John Joseph, who died at Norwich in 1878, aged 64, was a painter and drawing master, and his eldest son, Miles Edmund, who succeeded his father at King's College School, and who died at forty-seven in 1858, painted riversides and sea views in both oils and water-colours, and etched also. One small and long etching by him in the British Museum has two fishermen in its delicate and lively composition.

As a contrast—a contrast antithetical—to the Norwich painters we have the swift and impulsive mastery of William Müller, another man of genius whom the Royal Academy cold-shouldered, as though his independence were a crime. Like Bonington and Girtin, he lived only a few years, dying at thirty-three in 1845, yet leaving behind him enough work to keep the blood of innovating energy alive in several phases of art: British landscapes, some with anglers, seascapes, Eastern scenes, and architectural pictures. His passion for travel and for work at a white-heat of enthusiasm burnt out his life like a fever. A few minutes before his death he asked his brother to set his palette, and before this little job was done, Müller fell back suddenly, and died. He accompanied Sir Charles Fellowes to Lycia, 1843, and was quarantined twice on the return journey. Afterwards, Müller wrote: "I want to paint—it's oozing out of my fingers. I covered the walls of the Lazaretto at Smyrna; and at Malta they would not let me." He hated landscapes painted in a studio light, and worked out of doors on the spot, doing as much work in a day as many other men did in a week. He said that sky-painting from nature was generally neglected; and the varying relation between moving trees and a background of windblown clouds delighted him like military music and the tramp of marching troops.

Recently, at the Centenary Exhibition of the R.B.A., one of Müller's finest pictures—"Eel Bucks at Goring, 1843, with Boys Fishing," a canvas more than six feet long—was seen again, lent by Mrs. Walter Agnew. Tradition says that it was painted on the spot in a single day of inspired energy. Then Müller wrote behind the canvas: "Left for some fool to finish." Happily no fool has touched it, not even a picture restorer; but eighty years of time have mellowed the colour, leaving an impression of spontaneity that should be compared with Constable's patient handling, that matured gradually. Constable battled his way into landscapes, slowly, as in "The Young Waltonians," while Müller eloped with Nature's moods, a buccaneer of research in art. Of course he knew nothing about that science of colour which Impressionism has added to our perception of the world; but he worked in the open air, and without ado, before the pre-Raphaelites attempted to depict figures out of doors in true relation to their surroundings; and he had learnt enough from the great example set by Rubens to keep his handling open and free and broad.

In this he was aided by his eyes, which were short-sighted. His biographers tell us that one eye was brown, the other grey, and that he said jokingly: "With one eye I see colour, with the other form." Also, he was



THE EEL BUCKS AT GORING, with Children Fishing.
From the famous Picture by WILLIAM MULLER (1812-1845).
The Collection of Mrs. Walter Agnew.

left-handed ; and when I look at his " Eel Bucks at Goring," here reproduced, I think of those left-handed cricketers who have been adepts at boundary hitting.

V

Through this chapter and the next we must feel always the presence of Turner's ever-changing loneliness as a composer in colour, a miracle of a man, and inimitable like Shakespeare. Those of us who have written about him in order to draw near to him, if possible, cannot but feel remorseful after the words have been published, because words are as remote from his development as they are from sunrises and sunsets, and from other wonderful phenomena. One thing runs through the whole of his phases and periods : it is an incessant and changing desire to express infinity ; and at last, in despair, Turner admits to himself that he is defeated. One of our poets, in a fortunate simple phrase, speaks of a glorious soul finding its rest " in the sacred down of soft eternity." Men of unique genius need this repose ; and Turner's reactions from rapt elation into profound *morne* appear to have been very intense. When he wrote his peculiar MS. poem on *The Fallacies of Hope*, he was at war with himself, feeling periodically that the desire of his life, the expression of infinity, was a mirage that eluded him always. Note, in this connection, that verses from his poem appeared in the R.A. catalogues at the close of his career : 1840, 1842 (two quotations), 1843 (three quotations), 1845 (four), 1847, and again in 1850. The poem is quoted also in 1834, 1831 and 30, 1815 and 1812, when eleven lines are quoted below " Hannibal crossing the Alps." So we may believe that the fallacies of hope haunted the mind of Turner through nearly all the phases of his development.

As soon as he had gained from one protean mood of emotional style as much illusion of infinity as he could win from its particular subtleties, he tested another, till at last he reached his last phase, showing infinity as illumined space almost dazzlingly bright, wherein mirages of visual forms without substance are dimly seen through transfiguring atmosphere and sunshine. Some critics of note call this the period of his decline and decay, though it is plainly as purposeful as Shakespeare's belief that we are such stuff as dreams are made of, and that our little life is rounded with a sleep. Or we can take Carlyle's words : " Matter exists only spiritually, and to represent some idea and body it forth. Heaven and Earth are but the time-vesture of the Eternal." A mysticism akin to this, surely, was Turner's

final mood in his poetical handling of colours ; but, like all earlier moods, it formed against itself an emotional reaction ; so he placed it among the fallacies of hope, and stole away from his friends to that little house on the banks of the Thames at Chelsea where he, a sun-worshipper, had made his first studies from nature, and where he wanted to die alone. But a couple of friends found him there, and watched him die, on December 19th, 1851, with the sun shining on his face.¹

Much has been written—far too much—about his defects as a man ; written by men who never show even a twinkle of genius, but who yet are drawn towards Turner as moths at night are attracted by windows suddenly lighted from within a room. Turner suffered acutely from fools who asked silly questions, yet expected polite answers ; and when they were snubbed, they talked or wrote of their experience, and other fools quoted what they had said or written. One of them, for instance, just when Turner was ready to go fishing, asked him if he painted clouds from Nature. It was like saying to Wordsworth : “ Do you really feel in words when you show that you are moved by country scenes ? ” Turner eyed his questioner, and said in a grumble of reproach, “ How would you have me paint them ? ” Then he took up his rod and went out of the house to the water’s edge, leaving a snubbed fool alone with self-pity.

In most of Turner’s phases a fondness for angling appears here and there. At the Cotswold Gallery, London, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Finberg have shown an exquisite first-period example, “ Marford Mill, Near Wrexham, Denbighshire,” dating from 1795. The angler is merely incidental, but he shows that Turner carried a rod in his art when he travelled through the country as a topographical student of nineteen. About eleven years later he painted in oil-colours, on a canvas 36 in. by 46 in., a picture now known as “ The Trout Stream,” which represents trout-fishing on the Dee at Corwen Bridge in North Wales. The bridge, with its four round arches, and a fifth that is nearly hidden, spans the right-central part of the background with a hilly stretch of landscape beyond. Toward its left abutment a mountain shelves down in two uneven ridges from a crest which is partly veiled by mist. Near the arches the river is a mystery, but soon it comes curving towards the foreground, where an angler, on our right, has his rod raised to make his cast, an intent and eager figure admirably suggested, and placed just where he cannot be out of keeping in a vast composition charmed with

¹ Turner’s Death-Mask is in the National Portrait Gallery, London, a hauntingly memorable face.



NEAR BLAIR ATHOL, SCOTLAND. *Drawn and etched by J. M. W. TURNER, R.A. (1775-1851). Engraved by W. Say, Published June, 1891, in Turner's "Liber Studiorum." From a Proof lent by The Colnwood Gallery, London.*

silence, and with a serenity which is foiled only by the unassertive movements of anglers. Two fishermen, their day's enjoyment finished, have moved away left from the river, and, kneeling, count their catch ; while another in the middle distance stoops to put his right hand in the water, his long rod resting against his left shoulder. Mr. A. J. Finberg, in his deeply pondered and excellent book on *Turner's Sketches and Drawings*, says with truth that "The Trout Stream" is among "the most beautiful that art is capable of producing." Unfortunately it is maligned by reproduction in black-and-white ; it needs its own enchantment of quiet colour ; and a picture that is really priceless cannot be translated into a colour-plate for a book. The scale is too small, and other difficulties are too many. For these reasons I have not chosen "The Trout Stream."¹

But another early composition, a work conceived in monochrome, "Near Blair Athol," published June, 1811, in Turner's *Liber Studiorum*, comes to us from the same period of Simple Nature, and shows also the master's attitude towards casting. Note that the uplifted rod is lost in the background, and that the line is invisible. Truthfully so, of course ; but note also that this correct impression makes the angler somewhat too noticeable, somewhat detached from the composition, so that our eyes look towards him too long, and we cannot help wondering where the fly is going to drop on the water. A fishing rod when raised at the full length of an arm, even when its top disappears in the colour of a bankside background of hilly moorland, looks perspectively very long in its relation to a stretch of flat water flowing across a portion of the foreground : long enough, indeed, to cast a fly over the water into those boulders that balance Turner's design on its left-hand lower corner. In "The Trout Stream" the act of casting is handled in the same manner, but the fisherman faces us, and Turner is aided by mysteries of colour, and by repeating his fondness for the sport in different planes of his composition. There's a dim figure with a rod far off, on the near side of a valleyed little stretch of land below the mountain.

As an example of pictorial art is a flat surface that produces upon our sight and feelings illusions of a kind chosen by its composer, it is inevitably, in different ways, an adventure among compromises and conventions ; so we find that certain engravers have not hesitated to show a fisherman's line when it ought to have been left invisible, because even the finest ruled scratch made by the sharpest and thinnest needle becomes too thick and too

¹ A reproduction in photogravure is given in Sir Walter Armstrong's book on Turner ; it destroys the picture's beauty.

conspicuous to be in scale with a big landscape suggested on a small plate. If these engravers had been questioned they would have answered, probably, "Well, we never see in a stationary pose the incessantly moving legs of galloping horses, yet artists are obliged to stop the legs by means of accepted conventions. They cannot suggest a gallop by means of a blur of indistinct legs. And this being so, is angling in art to have no conventional aids?" Even instantaneous photography has its conventions, arresting the movement of galloping legs in scores of different poses, many of which are farcical. I wonder whether Turner ever discussed the art of angling movements with Chantrey and George Jones?

Fishing—both salt and freshwater—appear frequently enough in Turner's art to attract angling collectors; and at present there is no "run" on the prints and proofs done by the great engravers whom Turner disciplined. Thus one print in this book—the "Hampton Court Palace," with anglers in a boat, and one on the bankside far off on our left—is taken from a proof "touched" by Turner himself. I illustrate also the "Bedford," and the "Rievaulx Abbey, Yorkshire," the "Llanberis Lake," and "The Thames at Eton," a picture full of peace and poetry.

Of course, there are plenty of others with anglers in them, notably the "Bolton Abbey," and the lovely "More Park, Colne," a water-colour with two anglers in it, a girl standing erect, and a boy lying on his right side; they balance the left-hand lower corner in a dream-landscape tremulous with light, and broken colour, and with wind among the clouds that eddy over a hilly background of fairyland trees. In the Farnley Hall Collection, Yorkshire, there is "The Strid, Bolton Woods," equally notable, and reminiscent of those delightful early days that Turner enjoyed with Fawkes, whose death in 1820 ended a friendship which had lasted for twenty years. Never afterwards could he revisit the banks of the Wharfe without tears; and in old age when he spoke of Farnley his voice faltered. With all his gruffness and reserve, Turner was as tender-hearted as Thackeray. What he felt acutely in himself, acutely and hinderingly, was the contrast between what he achieved and his rough upbringing, which had left a stamp upon him and his manners that seemed to offend against social custom and refinement.

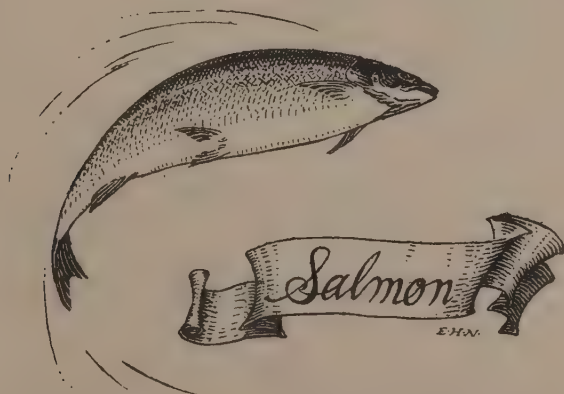
Somebody says—Goethe, I think—that women are silver plates into which poets drop golden apples. Of Turner we can say, perhaps, that he was a rough iron dish into which Providence put wonderful gems. There is a gem on a piece of white paper in the National Gallery, before which a



THE THAMES AT ETON. Engraved by W. RADCLIFFE
after J. M. W. TURNER, R.A. (1776-1851). From a Proof
lent by The Colnwood Gallery, London.

little curtain is drawn: just a study in water-pigment of freshwater fish, marvellously delicate and true, done with the lightest possible film of beautiful open colour. It is evident from this little study that any sort of fish, whether called "coarse" or not, was a romance of colour and shape to this master.

Finally, there is a story of Turner in the rain that differs greatly from Dr. Johnson's penance, but which brings before us his thorough patience. It is a story told by one of his friends, the Rev. Henry Scott Trimmer, vicar of Heston in the early years of the nineteenth century. There was a small pond in the vicarage garden, a stew, I suppose, and once Turner stood for two whole days under an umbrella fishing with a long rod; rain poured all the time, and not a nibble came. Yet even Ruskin wrote of Turner as irritable! forgetting that very patient men in their vocations have inevitable rebounds into impatience when their leisure is troubled by bores. It happens often that the very patient have the reputation of being "difficult," because the rebuffed bores defend themselves by circulating slander. A very precious relic of Turner's patience as a fisherman—his rod, or one of his rods—has come down to our time, and to-day it is treasured by Mr. A. N. Gilbey. From Turner it passed to Mrs. Booth, whom all readers of his life know; and Mrs. Booth, in 1864, gave the rod to William Vokins, the dealer in works of art, and a great authority on the English masters. Vokins presented it to his granddaughter, Mrs. Arthur Blyth, and from this lady, in 1911, it passed into the A. N. Gilbey Collection.



CHAPTER V

FROM ROBERT POLLARD TO SIR ROBERT FRANKLAND

I

WE go into this chapter through the versatility of Thomas Gosden, the sporting bibliopole, bookbinder, printseller, occasional publisher, antiquarian draughtsman, and patron of art. In 1840, two years after Robert Pollard's death, Gosden fell down dead in Pannier Alley, Newgate Street, below a memorial tablet bearing the date August 27th, 1688, and marking the highest ground in London City. At sixty he had come to the end of ends, active to the last, while pursuing one or other of his many hobbies. Nothing had been to him as a trade, and nothing as a profession; not even his all-round passion for sport, which had played no end of mischief with his hobby arts and crafts, compelling him to find in bankruptcy a lodging for his versatile high spirits. What a genial dilettante of many things all day long!

One portrait of him appears to be a superlative bookplate in which he tries to look like a medallion bust in profile of Napoleon. The little medallion is hung up upon the side of a pedestal, which is adorned also with symbols and objects of sport: two foxes' heads, some fish and a fishing-rod, a landing-net, a creel among some tall rushes, a crescent hunting-horn suspended below a dead hare, a gun and powder flask, and some of their dead feathered game. All this forms an engraving by John Scott, who adds an exquisite border of grapes and vine leaves, relieved by a fine racing cup of chased silver, a stag's head, a game bag, and a powder flask, and also some hunting things.

At one time this enshrined medallion portrait was assumed to be the profile of William Pickering; to-day it is known to be one of Gosden's hobbies, and its resemblance to Napoleon recalls to memory the origin of the Gosden Sporting Buttons, as related by a London magazine of the period, *The Annals of Sporting*, 1822.

The silver buttons, we are told, belonged to Mr. Gosden's own shooting jacket.

"Mr. John Scott happened to pass an evening with Mr. Gosden, and, while conning over the news of the day, Mr. G. discovered some 'Sporting Intelligence of St. Helena,' which he thought sufficiently curious to read aloud



FASHIONABLE ANGLING FROM A PUNT. *Drawn and Engraved
by ROBERT POLLARD (1755-1838). Signed R. Pollard on the upper
propelling pole. Reproduced from a line engraving lent by W. T. Spencer.*

to his companion. Bonaparte, it seems, had turned sportsman, and was accustomed to wear a jacket ornamented with silver buttons on which the different subjects of the chase were represented. Mr. Scott, who was astonished to hear of the existence of an artist in his own peculiar style, instantly said to his companion : ‘ Gosden, if you will be at the expense of a set of silver buttons for your shooting jacket, I will engrave them, and I will stake ten times their value that they shall beat the great Emperor’s buttons, or those of any other person in the world, as perfect representations of the various animals of the chase.’ ”

This offer was accepted at once, for it had never occurred to Gosden that he might perhaps be able to compete against Napoleon. Nimrod, and some others, had satisfied him ; but now—— ! With help from Abraham Cooper, then R.A., who drew what was needed on the buttons, Gosden set to work overjoyed, encouraging Scott. The buttons finished, a portrait was painted by Ben Marshall, showing Gosden, gun in hand, as a rival of J. J. Shaddick, a celebrated shot whom Marshall had painted life-size, accompanied by a chestnut horse and two pointers. Gosden has a setter with him, and a pointer, probably his favourite, named Doll, whose portrait graced the lid of his snuff-box. His right hand rests on the top bar of a high stile, and he turns toward his left to look proudly at his chosen portraitist. Behind him in shadow is a wood. Of course, he wears a tall beaver, black and dapper, for a tandy-coloured one would be commonplace and vulgar. His shooting coat has enough creases everywhere to be a witness of its frequent use in the woods and fields ; and as for his trim leggings, they prove that here is a sportsman with good male servants.

In this picture Gosden is a squire of many acres, lord of a manor somewhere ; while in another, painted by Abraham Cooper, R.A., he is a master of the rod and line, and a devoted protector of Walton and Cotton. This work also is a whole-length portrait, and Gosden is evidently at ease near a pretty brook on his own mythical property ; for in what other place could he have been able to lean against a votive altar dedicated to the memory of Cotton and Walton ? We may be certain that he wears on his coat a set of those bronze Anglers’ Buttons for a Fishing Jacket which he catalogued for sale at £1, and upon which was stamped “ The Meeting at Tottenham Cross.” We know that his shooting jacket in Ben Marshall’s picture is adorned with those beautiful silver buttons drawn on the metal by the Academician Cooper, and engraved exquisitely by John Scott. In silver, for hunting frocks, the buttons cost only £4 for a set of fifteen ; struck in bronze for a shooting jacket, £1, and no more.

Cooper's picture appeared as frontispiece to that poem in ten cantos, with notes, called *The Angler*, which Thomas Pike Lathy had sold as original work of his own to Gosden, receiving £30 for a freak of—well, it has been called plagiaristic fraud. Poor Gosden! When Lathy put his hand on *The Angler*, Eight Dialogues in Verse, published anonymously in 1758, he found the work of an eighteenth-century humorist who had been forgotten by most anglers and who was worth re-publishing. According to *Bibliotheca Piscatoria*, *The Angler* came from the pen of Dr. Thomas Scott, of Ipswich, a dissenting minister who studied patience partly as a fisherman, and partly by translating the Book of Job into English verse; while Mr. H. T. Sheringham, who has introduced the book to present-day readers, finds that the writer's tone is Anglican rather than dissenting, though "the indications are, perhaps, but slight." Gosden, with his usual enthusiasm, set to work on his purchase, printing one copy on vellum, and twenty-five copies on drawing-paper, the sale price of these being fixed at £2 12s. 6d. each. His advertisement does not mention a portrait of himself by Abraham Cooper; it speaks of "Wood Cuts of Artificial Flies, etc., etc., superbly and appropriately bound in Morocco."

Mr. William Loring Andrews, in his charming monograph on Gosden, New York, 1906, illustrates the binding of one copy—a stamped binding in claret-coloured and straight-grained morocco; and he says of this copy, which bears the date London, 1819: "There is nothing in its pages from beginning to end that affords the slightest indication that either Gosden or Lathy had any connection with the book."¹ How is this fact to be viewed? There are two editions of the book, one of 1819, the other of 1820, and Gosden's name as publisher is omitted from their title pages. The earlier edition was printed for W. Wright, 46, Fleet Street, and M. Iley, 1, Somerset Street; while the second was printed for J. H. Burn. Further, Mr. Arthur N. Gilbey has a catalogue annotated by Gosden of the William Simonds Higgs Sale, 1820, and Gosden, referring to a copy of *The Angler* that was sold, wrote as follows in his neat, small, and confident penmanship:—

"I published this pirated work by Lathy, and for the MS. I gave £30. By the bye, my own copy I had printed on vellum, which cost me ten pounds for the vellum only."

We do not learn why he failed to print his name as publisher. Soon after

¹ The copy on my desk of Loring Andrews' book is a presentation one sent to Messrs. Robson & Co., who have kindly lent it to me. Only 157 copies were printed: thirty-two on Imperial Japan paper, and the rest on Van Gelder hand-made paper.



Kneeling Boy: thin breeches, ruddy brown coat, red waistcoat.

Knelt on Right, black coat and hat, expensile trousers, florid flesh tones.
The other knelt: grey hat, blue coat, lilac-grey coat and trousers.

FISHERMEN. First Sketch in Oil-Colours by PHILIP REINAGLE, R.A. (1749-1833), for the Picture engraved in 1814 by Hassell and Nicholls. The A. N. Gilbey Collection. The engraving also is reproduced in this book, to show Reinagle's improvements.

the adventure was published there appeared in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, November, 1819, p. 407, a letter written from Sutton Coldfield by a great-nephew of Dr. Scott, of Ipswich, who owned the original MS. in Dr. Scott's handwriting. The letter is dated October 21st, and is signed J. M. It begins :

"A poem has lately made its appearance, entitled '*The Angler : a Poem in Ten Cantos, with proper instructions in the Art,*' etc., '*by Piscator.*' Printed in London, 1819. You may judge of my surprise on being informed, and by finding on examination myself, that this poem contains in it, at different intervals, and with slight occasional variations, nearly the whole of a MS. Poem in my own possession. That poem is entitled *The Angler*, and contains in one book (for it is not divided) 634 lines, with notes. The subscription is 'Ipswich, Jan. 4, 1755.' The name of the author is Thomas Scott, who was my great-uncle by my mother's side. . . . I should add that my MS. is an autograph of the author, of whose handwriting I have two other specimens. And it is important likewise to add that most of the notes in this poem are copied almost verbatim into the modern one. The first thought which occurred to me, on being made acquainted with this extraordinary incorporation, was that some acknowledgment might be made of the fact by the author, and the whole procedure be satisfactorily explained. But nothing of the kind is to be found. And indeed the following sentence in the Preface, p. ix., seems to exclude all obligations in the poetical portion of the work : 'The performance of such a work can deserve no higher appellation than that of a compilation, arranged in a new, that is to say, a *poetical form.*' How *new* the *poetical form* is the foregoing statement determines. . . ."

J. M. goes on to speak of other writings by Thomas Scott, and seeks help in several matters of research from readers of *The Gentleman's Magazine*. I find no answer from Gosden to J. M.'s letter.

Lathy is found in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, while Gosden is omitted. Even Austin Dobson, and Dr. Dibden also, failed to discover a Dickensian character whom young Dickens, unhappily, never met—a Mark Tapley of sporting bibliopoles and printsellers, etc., who would have delighted Boz.

Can you think of the eighteen-thirties without remembering a quartette of kindred spirits, Robert Seymour, George Cruikshank, young Boz of *The Morning Chronicle*, and Gosden in his last phase? It was in the autumn of 1835, five years before Gosden died, that Dickens, a young fellow of twenty-three, was asked by Chapman and Hall to write a monthly something which should be a vehicle for certain etched plates by Robert Seymour; a sort of

"Nimrod Club," whose members were to go out shooting, fishing, and so forth, in order to get themselves into difficulties through their want of sporting experience. Dickens raised objections. Although born and partly bred in the country, he was no great sportsman, except in regard of all sorts of locomotion; the idea was far from new, having been much used already; the plates should arise naturally out of the text, and he would prefer to take his own way, with a freer range of English scenes and people.

"My views being deferred to," writes Dickens, "I thought of Mr. Pickwick, and wrote the first number; from the proof sheets of which Mr. Seymour made his drawing of the Club, and that happy portrait of its founder by which he is always recognized, and which may be said to have made him a reality. I connected Mr. Pickwick with a Club because of the original suggestion, and I put in Mr. Winkle for the use of Mr. Seymour. We started with a number of twenty-four pages instead of thirty-two, and four illustrations in lieu of a couple."

Before the second number was published, Robert Seymour's mind gave way, and he died by his own hand, April 20th, 1836, after much silly and hateful persecution from Gilbert A'Beckett, owner and editor of *Figaro in London*.

We do not find the names of Seymour and Cruikshank advertised in that list of prints and proofs, and of coloured engravings, issued by T. Gosden when his "Sportsman's Repository" moved from Piccadilly to 18, Bedford Street, Covent Garden, about 1825. Gosden's chosen artists were Ben Marshall, Luke Clennell, Bristow of Windsor, the Academician A. Cooper, Roberts of Bayswater, Sawrey Gilpin, R.A., Stephen Elmer, A.R.A., who had died in 1796, and several others, including a Frenchman, S. David, whose "Dibbing for Chub" I reproduce from an oil-picture in Mr. A. N. Gilbey's collection. There are points of resemblance between this painting and the occasional work in oils by Samuel Howitt, who composed a rather similar fishing piece which was turned into a print.¹

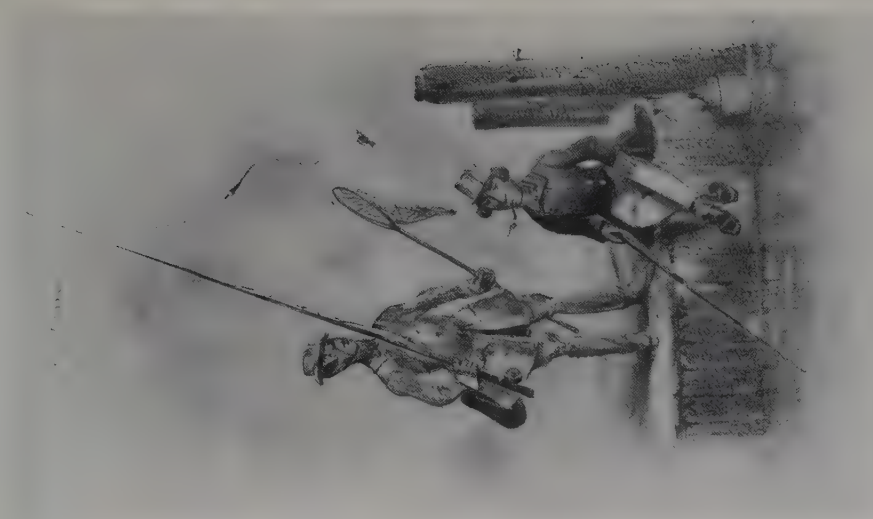
Gosden is loved by all students of angling history, I believe; so we have reason to grieve that we have no account of him written by contemporaries, many of whom would have done him justice as a man, most notably young Dickens and Surtees.

Cruikshank, too, in a few illustrated chapters, would have got no end of

¹ The late Daniel B. Fearing catalogued a set of fourteen lithographs, coloured by hand, as follows: *Plaisirs et Déplaisirs de la Pêche . . . d'après J. David* [1820]. J. David, presumably, was a relative of S. David. I have never seen a signed example of his work.



ANGLING À LA MODE. From an original Etching by **GEORGE CRUIKSHANK** (1792-1878). Lent by Messrs. James Rindles-Son, London.



"UNCOMMON SMALL! UNCOMMON! PERCH THOUGH!!" From an Original Water-Colour by **ROBERT SEYMOUR** (died by his own hands, 1836). The M. H. Spolmann Collection

genial fun out of Gosden's æsthetic Mark Tapleyism, as a bookbinder and publisher, printseller, general sportsman, and antiquarian artist, who made sketches of a great many London tombs and sepulchral monuments, being in one mood a happy lover of carved hour-glasses, and scythes in the hands of Death, and other emblems of mortality.¹ It is easy to think of Gosden in a country churchyard near London, busily sketching a tombstone while his gun rested among the graves, and his pointer and setter seemed as bored as they look in Ben Marshall's portrait as engraved by Maile. Good-natured through and through, Gosden, of course, was bled by those human leeches that cluster upon public men of his temperament. Cruikshank would have found many types of character for a monograph enriched with lively etchings. Gosden himself would have published it gladly, printing two or three copies on vellum, and a few on his favourite green paper, every binding designed by himself, and equal perhaps to Roger Payne's work.

Cruikshank I illustrate from one of his light-handed and lively little etchings of daily satire, mamma and her pretty daughter angling for and landing a big society fish, whose coronet seems to have a wreath of strawberry leaves. This mood of graphic fun, the crown-and-coronet variety, has gone out of vogue. A century ago, and later, not even kings and princes were immune from the humour that composed angling cartoons for enterprising printsellers. Several were called "A Kingfisher," on the banks of the Thames, perhaps, as in the political caricature published by T. Gillard, December 6th, 1826. George the Fourth is the statesman in this cartoon.

Another cartoonist, Foz, the print-publisher S. W. Fores, took ideas from angling, as in his "Fishing Scene in Windsor Park : 'Coming Events cast their Shadows before them.' " Fores used to hire out little portfolios of prints to any clients who wanted to pass a pleasant evening at home, and some of the prints were as candid as Thackeray's Four Georges became. Ideas of loyalty to the Crown have altered, Thackeray's candour having been displaced by a routine of noisy fervour governed by newspapers with their photographers ; but is this a good thing ? Active influences do harm invariably to their own aims by causing reactions ; hence we have no reason to look upon our journalized loyalty as better for the Throne than were kingfisher cartoons and Thackeray's lectures. If anything can kill a creed it is newspaper shouting, aided by spying and vulgar photographs. On the other

¹ See *Notes and Queries*, 6th Series, vol. iv., July—December, 1881, p. 328. Here Gosden's drawings of tombs and sepulchral monuments are sought for, together with facts about his history, but the editor and his readers have no information to give.

hand, no harm was done when a king could be cartooned as a statesman in the act of angling for political gudgeon; a statesman so wrapped up in his own time that he had a gouty and bandaged foot as a mark of goodwill towards his people.

So far as I know, Robert Seymour did no such political angling. In this book he is represented by two subjects. One of them is a happy composition that he drew on stone shortly before his overstrained mind gave way, while the other is from a water-colour in M. H. Spielmann's Collection. Water-colour sketches by Seymour are uncommon. This one is drawn with a softish pencil, then tinted with semi-liquid pigment, which is dragged lightly over the paper's texture. Shadows are put in with a brush dipped in oxgall and water, and they shine as though varnished when examined sideways against the light. Only the sky is painted with a liquid brush, and the blue is very thin, just toning the paper unevenly. The standing angler, who has caught a fish, mutters: "Uncommon small! Uncommon! Perch though!!" His rod and line are put in very lightly, and without a hitch, like his landing-net. Note also the costumes, for they add some variations to our examples of historic tailoring.¹

II

Robert Pollard's four angling prints, daintily but firmly touched, and *à la mode*, delineate the attire rashly chosen for a rainy climate at the beginning of George the Fourth's reign. They were published on June 2nd, 1823, by Robert Pollard and Son, and Robert Pollard's name as author is printed on one of the poles in the composition of punt fishing.² So much care is taken with every detail of dress that these line engravings may be described quite fairly as costume-pieces, if not as novel fashion plates designed by Pollard to give useful ideas in advertising to tradesmen. Viewed in this way they remain original, for I have come upon only one fashion plate of to-day wherein angling

¹ A selection of Seymour's angling prints will be found in the large volume of *Seymour's Humorous Sketches*, comprising eighty-six caricature etchings, illustrated in prose and verse by Alfred Crowquill, London, 1878. See the plates facing pp. 15, 25, 29, 35, 41, 61, 63, 65, 87, 91 (a Dominie, with his line fast in the branch of a tree, giving a pompous lesson in fishing to George, his pupil), 107 (sea-fishing and sea-sickness at Margate, whiting being the double sport), 147, and 171 (the Misadventure of Nobbs and Dobbs). There are some woodcuts after Seymour in Penn's *Maxims and Hints on Angling*, and about 600 examples of his work will be found in *The Penny Magazine*, from 1832, and *Figaro in London*, from December, 1831.

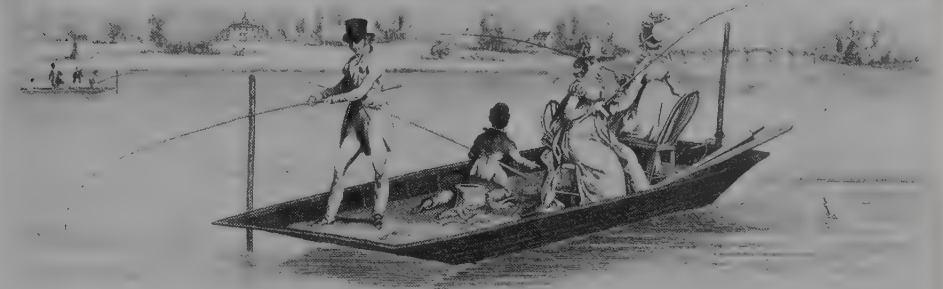
² This signature, plain as it is, has been overlooked by a good many printsellers, who have attributed these fishing prints to Robert Pollard's son, James, who never attained his father's ease and style of line drawing, and whose earliest angling prints bear the date 1831.



THE CONTEMPLATIVE BOY'S RECREATION.
Designed and Engraved by ROBERT POLLARD (1755-1838).



FLY-FISHING ON THE WYE AT HADDON HALL. *Engraved
 by* E. RADCLIFFE *after a Water-Colour by* DAVID COX (1783-1859).



FASHIONABLE ANGLING. *A Set of Four Costume Pieces in line engraving by ROBERT POLLARD, Painter and Engraver (1755-1838). See pages 128-130. From scarce Proofs in the Collection of an American Lady.*

and a new craze in costume were united. The design was French, and its method was quaintly idealistic, and thus unlike Pollard's.

A considerable number of angling prints produced in the nineteenth century may be regarded as aids to advertising, sometimes political, as in H. B.'s cartoons, and now and then to make fishing rivers more popular. This applies to some large colour-plates of Thames fish after J. W. Giles, R.S.A. Much money was put into fashion plates between 1820 and 1860, but the figures, often prettily engraved and coloured, were not actors in daily life; they obeyed a routine of inanity, like most of the costume sketches published to-day by newspapers and magazines.

Whether Robert Pollard did or did not intend his fishing prints as ideas that would improve advertising, we cannot say; but his millinery and his tailoring united to active sport are more intimately careful than Reinagle's or than Rowlandson's, to take only two examples. They recall to memory the early eighteenth-century work of Wootton and James Seymour, whose hunting costumes are very carefully studied, as though sportsmen of those days were almost as hypercritical as the fops led by Beau Nash (1674-1761). Burford's coloured mezzotint after James Seymour of a fashionable horseman in the act of leaping a fence has a hunting dress as minutely prim and precise as Robert Pollard's liking for hats, coats, and what not. The two ladies in Pollard's print of amateur punt fishing were chosen recently by a wholesale milliner as models with charming hats, which could be adapted to present-day styles.

Several experts have found fault with Robert Pollard's angling as angling, calling it the sport of tyros; but surely tyros have a right to do what they can. The prints are well composed, and handled with a pleasant feeling for suggested landscape. There's not a touch too many, and every line is firm and expressive. The print of anglers packing up is an improvement on James Pollard's, considered as a period composition.¹

In these prints Robert is deliberately dandified—a man of fashion. As a contrast we have Philip Reinagle's famous group of "Fishermen," finely engraved by J. Hassell and W. Nicholls, and published by Hassell and T. Rickards on May 2nd, 1814, with a dedication to Claude Scott, of Sans Souci, Dorsetshire. A well-preserved proof in colours of this engraving is greatly valued by collectors of sporting prints.

¹ James Pollard's was published by T. Helme, a picture-frame manufacturer, on November 17th, 1831, eight years after his father's line engravings. Its hilly background is the most attractive part of its design.

Mr. A. N. Gilbey's Collection has an oil-study for this picture, painted with a full brush, similar in its lines and masses, in its general design, but noticeably different both as a costume-piece and as portraiture. The kneeling figure in the sketch is a boy attendant, a servant, while the proof engraving shows a well-studied portrait of a gentleman whose profile resembles that of the great Tom Girtin, who died at the age of twenty-seven, November 9th, 1802. The resemblance, indeed, is very marked, and I am inclined to accept this kneeling angler as a memorial portrait of Girtin. The oil-sketch, again, attractive as a piece of colour, has stiffer lines in the hand-bridge and the quaint little shed on piles; has also a smaller creel and less imposing fish; and the two standing fishermen have taller hats, different coats and trousers, and are less at ease. Indeed, the standing anglers in the proof engraving look prepared for rain, unlike most of the fishermen portrayed by artists of the period. Does anyone know the present owner of the painting from which Hassell and Nicholls did their work?

There is also another Reinagle fishing picture that seems to be lost. It was exhibited at the R.A. in 1774, its title being "Portraits of Two Young Gentlemen with their Sister, fishing." At the time Reinagle was twenty-five, and this portrait group would represent costumes worn in England just before the rise of Washington.

Following costume into the art of a big master, we come now to the only known angling picture painted by Sir Henry Raeburn, R.A. (1756-1823), who was fond of trout-fishing, and also of archery and shooting. The angling picture is in our National Gallery, a life-size portrait, full length, of Colonel Bryce McMurdo, seated on a rock below a bank, as if to soil his tightly-fitting nankeen pantaloons, a trout-stream flowing near to him, a creel at his feet, and a rod resting under his right arm against the shoulder of a dark green coat, trimly cut and swallow-tailed. The shoe on one foot is so light and "janty" that it looks fit for carpets, not for fishing; while the other has a contrivance around it, seemingly to prevent McMurdo from slipping.

As the picture has a glass before it, in which many things are reflected, no person can study it properly; but it has Raeburn's quiet simplicity and his masculine freedom of touch. On the other hand, it is a period picture painted indoors. Its landscape and its atmosphere have no trace of those open-air qualities which Turner and Constable loved more and more, and which impart a wonderful freshness to Mr. Sargent's great angling picture, and to the portrait of Mr. and Mrs. F. S. Oliver by Charles Furse. Raeburn's picture is a difficult one to photograph, one reason being that the relation of its angler



FISHERMEN. From a Rare Proof in Colour of the Engraving by J. HASSALL and W. NICHOLLS, published in 1814, after an Oil Painting by PHILIP REINGALE, R.A. (1749-1833). See pages 129, 130, and compare this illustration with the first sketch in oil-colours facing p. 125.

to the background is not a natural relation, but a thing imagined and arbitrary. When Raeburn died, in 1823, open-air painting had begun to break through some of the inherited conventions. Its pathfinding was aided by one Old Master, Rubens, whose innovating landscape of the "Château de Stein," long neglected, and brought to England about 1814, had greatly impressed Turner, Constable, James Ward, Rowlandson also, I believe, and William Müller.

Certain minor painters also were inspired by the new spirit, studying from Nature without awe of old authority. One of these landscapists has come to be known vaguely as W. Jones, or William Jones, though nothing can be learnt about his life. He did not exhibit in London, and the only engravings after his pictures—two angling subjects, and two of shooting, by H. Pyall, dated 1832 and 1833—speak of him only as Jones. His outlook and style differ from those of Robert Jones, another painter fond of sport, and they have no kinship at all with the qualities of Turner's great friend, George Jones, R.A., who lived from 1786 to 1869.

Mr. A. N. Gilbey has collected five of W. Jones's landscapes; they are angling pieces true in feeling, painted with a considerable body of colour, and showing a dislike for too much transparency. Their colour has darkened somewhat, but their author sought carefully after varieties of texture that would suggest luminously the palpitation of reflected lights on windblown leaves and grasses. He had also a sense of design free from affectation, and noted anglers agree that he understood the sport of angling. Mr. A. N. Gilbey has one of the pictures engraved by Pyall, "May Fly Fishing," a very remarkable little bit of sportsmanly observation and sincere handling.

English country houses must have other paintings by this Jones, whose style is easy to recognize. As for the man himself, he may have been a nephew of George Jones, R.A., and I have tried also to trace some connection between him and an entomologist of the period, William Jones, of Chelsea, whose research is mentioned in vol. x. of *Linnean Transactions*, and also by Edward Barnard's *Angling Memories and Maxims*, which date from 1833. Another W. Jones, who may have had a grandson William, was an Irish artist, who worked in his native country, and whose pictures of Powerscourt Waterfall, and the Salmon Leap at Leixlip, were engraved by Giles King, in the years 1744-45. There was also a William Jones, who exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1818 to 1853, and who painted Blomfield Bishop of London (1829), Archdeacon Wrangham (1832), and Richard Earl of Grosvenor, M.P., a portrait mezzotinted by Charles Turner, 10¼ in. by 8½ in., and

published in Chester by John Seacombe, November 20th, 1833. There are no angling landscapes among the exhibited pictures of this William Jones; but he may be the man we seek. Charles Turner mezzotinted another of his portraits, one of John Finchett Maddock, M.P., town clerk of Chester in 1832. The painter is described as "William Jones, Esq.," and the mezzotint was published for G. Harding, of Chester, September 1st, 1834.

There was a William Jones of Bath, who in 1770 exhibited a picture of fruit, with a monkey; and, a year later, a bunch of grapes. This painter also may have had a son William, like the sculptor of the same name.

Again, the Bristol Academy of Arts had a member named William E. Jones, who, between 1853 and 1871, exhibited five times at the Royal Academy; his first pictures were called "The King of the Coast" and "Evening, Winter: Mill near Roe, North Wales." A "Mill Stream" was his subject in 1855, and his last picture was a "Winter Morning at Newbridge, Somerset." This man's titles are nearer to the W. Jones rediscovered by Mr. A. N. Gilbey.

Whoever this Jones may have been, his angling landscapes, considered as landscapes, are to me more interesting than most of those by James Pollard; and when we place them side by side with oil-paintings by Robert Jones, Edmund Bristow, and Samuel Alken, junior, certain qualities of a local school certainly seem to be present.

To appreciate these qualities in W. Jones we have but to compare them with the illustrations I give after Francis Wheatley, R.A., a famous name, and Francis Nicholson. True, the Wheatley is a water-colour, very well composed; but the nature of its painter's fundamental outlook on his chosen subject, and his manner of conveying that outlook to us, belongs to an earlier tradition than W. Jones's, a tradition that gathered less from Nature and more from accepted rules of composition.¹ Nicholson's "Salmon Fishing" aims at the heroic style, which is made more noticeable by the fact that a huge dip-net is employed instead of a common landing-net. Really it seems big enough to land a drowning angler.

Nicholson was a Yorkshireman, born at Pickering, 1753, and at first he practised in various parts of his native county, painting chiefly in oil. This angling picture is probably one of his first period oils, and perhaps it represents a wooded gorge on the Yorkshire Esk. When Nicholson came to London he gave himself up to lithography, producing some 800 designs on stone. Later he was a leading member of the water-colour school, also a writer on the

¹ There are some—just a few—prettier angling water-colours by Wheatley, with a charm of their own, delicate and pale-coloured.



ROACH FISHING. *An Oil Painting by W. JONES, dating from the Eighteen Hundred and Thirties. The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.*



MAY FLY FISHING. *An Oil Painting by W. JONES, 1832. See pp. 131, 132. The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection. Engraved by H. Pyall in 1833, and published by S. Knights.*

practice of art, and a bold experimenter technically. Further, his remarks on pigments and their stability, written in 1822, carry us far towards present-day research. Altogether, then, Nicholson ranks as an important man among his contemporaries. He died in London on May 6th, 1844, at the age of ninety-one.

III

When painters are regarded not as artists only, but also as historians, a place will be found in little illustrated monographs for a good many men whose work at present is overlooked. I am not thinking here of any of the bigger men whose finest productions remain but little known, like Rowlandson's and Girtin's. Both Girtin and Rowlandson visited France, adding foreign history to their public services. Rowlandson was there both before and after the Revolution, doing a long and great series of drawings, so varied and so true historically, that Professor Selwyn Image has written of them as follows :—

“ I remember a friend of mine, a serious and accomplished student of history, once telling me, that no writers or historians had brought home to him the amazing change worked by the Revolution throughout the country and in men's manners with one half the vividness of Rowlandson's drawings. As historical records, therefore, they are invaluable : but that, of course, does not make them artistic masterpieces.”

True : but historical records, when they are not also masterpieces of art, like scores of Rowlandson's finer works, should not be neglected, especially now that photographs of pictures occupy but little space when they are collected.

It happened soon after 1823 that a painter named George Samuel, while sketching at a place unrecorded, was killed by the falling of an old wall. Thirty-four years earlier he made a hit by painting a lively view of the Thames from Rotherhithe during the great frost of 1789, the year of the French Revolution. Who else painted the ice-bound Thames ? Between 1785 and 1822, a very important span of years in British art, Samuel was welcomed annually as an exhibitor by the Royal Academy, and also by the British Institution ; so he cannot have been regarded as a duffer. For Walton's *Angler*, in 1808, he made two small oil-paintings, one of Cotton's Fishing Hut on the Dove, another of a Roadside Cottage : these I have seen in Mr. A. N. Gilbey's Collection. At the Victoria and Albert Museum George Samuel is represented by a water-colour, “ Pont Aberglasllyn, North Wales,” and

the catalogue says that he painted chiefly in water-colour. But this statement may be doubted. Recently, at Messrs. Parsons in the Brompton Road, London, I saw a very large oil-painting by Samuel, dated 1814, and painted on the Thames, seemingly in the neighbourhood of Windsor. Though dusty and in need of varnish, it remains a notably ambitious picture for a minor landscapist of its period, and a good photograph of it would be valuable among old prints of the Thames. The figures on shore include a fisherman, busy with his hook and line ; he seems to belong to a little boating party that is preparing to leave the bank.¹

Then there is William Walker, another painter-angler, born at Hackney, 1780, and a pupil of Sir Robert Smirke, R.A. At the age of twenty-three he went to Greece and made drawings of the architectural remains. Five years later he became a member of the Associated Artists in Water-Colour, and later of the Old Water-Colour Society. But he was an oil-painter also, and in both mediums his landscapes and marines were better than his figure-painting. I have seen only one angling picture by William Walker, a bold water-colour, dated 1814, in the A. N. Gilbey Collection. It has a pleasant, willowy landscape, and two anglers, schoolboys, whose "Unexpected Bite" leaves them very unexcited, though they are shown in the act of landing a pike with a net which looks too small and too light. Still, the technical qualities are free, and the boys are as comfortably dressed as young cricketers of to-day, apart from a tall hat lying on its side near some water-plants. This hat reminds me of Eton ; and perhaps the handsome lad who has caught the pike, while fishing for small fry, may be an Etonian of 1814.

One cannot overlook Richard Westall, R.A., because his few angling subjects have admirers, particularly in proof engravings. In 1836, the year of his death, he drew in water-colour a pretty, delicate boy trying to get fish from a woodland stream ; a sort of miniature angling, almost as smooth as polished ivory. Even at his best Westall represents an obsoletely English school that was often shamed by the better and stronger work done by French women painters, as by Marie Benoits, Madame Guyard, Marie Amélie Cogniet, Marie Françoise Mayer, Madame Vigée Le Brun, and several others, like Mlle. Bouilliar. I cannot admire any English painter who lived through the Washington-Napoleon period and yet were less energetic than these

¹ The largest of Samuel's pictures at the British Institution were "London from Greenwich Park, 1817" (73 in. by 90 in.) ; and "Windsor Castle, 1818" (86 in. by 57 in.). He loved castles and mills and the Thames. In 1787 he painted "Beddington Mills, Surrey," and in 1800 "Pike Pool on the Dove, Derbyshire."



GUDGEON FISHING, OR HE'S FAIRLY HOOK'D. *Engraved in 1771 by T. WILSON, after a Drawing by A. WALKER (1726-1766). An example of Bonaparte Idealism. For this phase of angling print, see pages 110, 134, 135, 142, 177. From a rare Mezzotint Proof in the Collection of an American lady.*

French ladies. Vigée Le Brun and Marie Benoits could have designed better idyllic angling prints than those which have been delivered down to us from William Redmore Bigg, Richard Westall, and poor William Tomkins, A.R.A. (1730-1792), whose composition called "Amusement," dated 1789, is very inferior to the children painted by Anna Rosalie Filleul, who died in 1794.¹ R. Dighton's "August," with an over-dressed lady angler leaning against some timber rails, belongs to the same mood of boudoir grace, like the earlier and scarcer proof called "August," and signed *T. Burford ad vivum delin. et fecit.*

Anthony Walker allied the boudoir angling sentiment with some day-by-day satire, and I illustrate his "Gudgeon Fishing, or He's Fairly Hook'd," from a costly mezzotint engraved by T. Wilson, and published by Robert Sayer on August 20th, 1771. Robert Sayer and J. Bennett, on January 17th, 1781, brought out another costly mezzotint, "The Angelic Angler," by John Raphael Smith, very interesting as a study of costume. I give it side by side with J. R. Smith's "Strephon and Phyllis," a feeble Strephon, who looks towards us for admiration, instead of trying to win the Beauty on this side of the tree, who should have pride enough to walk away. Even the manliness of J. R. Smith was enfeebled by the boudoir style.

The son of Thomas Smith of Derby, a painter who liked angling, he was born in 1752, and for a time he worked in a linen-draper's shop at Derby. But inherited gifts for art governed him, and going to London he began an adventurous career, painting miniatures while studying the great craft of mezzotint engraving—a craft in which he achieved fame. Yet he was not satisfied. His ambition was to attain a good position as a painter, so he drew portraits in crayons and painted subject pictures in oil-colours; between 1773 and 1805 he was welcomed by exhibitions; and if his character had been strong and steady there would have been no need for the itinerant worries of his later years, when he had to ramble in search of clients. J. R. Smith died at Doncaster, March 2nd, 1812.

The A. N. Gilbey Collection has an early oil-painting by him, a fishing party at Hampton-on-Thames, handled broadly, and good in colour. The style is not so free and spontaneous as J. R. Smith's crayon portraits; it is a little fatigued here and there; but the fatigue is caused by a brave attack, not by timid and pottering retouches.² The ferryman in his very long and

¹ Her portrait of the three little sons of Charles X of France, with their pet dog, is in the Musée de Versailles.

² See block facing page 189.

blue old coat, and red waistcoat, and buff breeches, who stands erect with the river behind him, was a troublesome figure to paint, but at last J. R. S. prevented him from silhouetting hardly and dryly against a pale liquid background. The other four characters and their dog form a very interesting group, with notable costumes. The little girl on our left, dressed in mauvy-grey, sets us thinking of Morland, while the other young person, Miss Crump, in pale lavender and white, whose lofty hat is relieved by a blue crown, belongs to J. R. Smith's observation. Mr. Lawrence, who carries a long fishing-rod, has a green coat adorned with silvery buttons, a straw-coloured waistcoat, breeches, and top-boots. His wife is a formidable old lady, with her black mantle, grey dress, and wonderful black hat, that enables her to tower above her husband. Lady fishing costumes are very remarkable, and all entertaining.

IV

We turn to Rowlandson. In his really serious art, and also in many of his unpleasant caricatures, there is a very conspicuous quality of able design, varied, and spontaneously vital. What is Design? It is a unity composed by the orchestral attributes of order and style in graphic and pictorial art; it is different in all good artists; and as it appeals through the eyes to every mind's own æsthetic sensibility, we cannot hope to define its variety. Definitions come from the mind's literary faculties, which often are hostile to the special qualities that pictures and drawings need. The most useful remarks on Design that I can remember, appear in a study of Rowlandson by Professor Selwyn Image, published in *The Burlington Magazine*, October, 1908; a thorough study of the serious art of this wayward genius, treating justly of his four great gifts: his vitality, his sense of beauty, the quiet and subtle fascination of his colour, and his original design. Professor Image says:

"It may be well for me to stay a moment on this word Design, and explain what I mean by it. Every picture in its fundamental structure is an arrangement of lines or masses, generally of lines and masses, within the limitation of the shape and size of the canvas or paper settled on. It is with these lines and masses, thought of wholly for their own sake, that Design concerns itself. If the Design is good, those lines and masses stand in such disciplined relation to one another, that each one produces its calculated effect in its precise position, and could not be altered without loss; and all of them together produce an harmonious whole, that leaves upon us the satisfied sense, that there is wanted neither less nor more. Further, this pattern of lines and



ANGLERS NEAR A WATERMILL. From a Drawing by THOMAS ROWLANDSON (1756 - 1827). The Arthur N. Gilkey Collection.



SOME MISHAPS IN THE PLEASURES OF ANGLING. Engraved by CHARLES TURNER after Sir ROBERT FRANKLAND, Bart., of Thirlby Hall, near Thirsk, who worked at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. From a Rare Aquatint, lent by Mr. J. Kinell, London.

masses has its complete realization within the arbitrary space settled on as the limits of the picture.

"Now this element of Design is paramount in all the finest art, nay, is indeed a fundamental element of its fineness. I cannot here stay to question how far the faculty for it may be acquired, or is innate and incommunicable. You must forgive me, therefore, if I risk the bare statement, that in its best sense it is incommunicable, and to a large degree even unconscious on the part of the artist. But not only is it present, wherever art is fine; but, so far forth and with whatever other shortcomings, that art always is fine, in which it is present. . . ."

In Rowlandson's best work it never fails to be active, and its presence has a most enjoyable naturalness, unstudied, unsought, and yet completely satisfying, even when its animated figures are as offhand as rapid handwriting. At present, unfortunately, Rowlandson remains overshadowed by his caricatures, many of which are brutal, or hideous, or even indecent. These things he drew as rapidly as he talked, and they delighted one very active taste of a generation that drank itself into gout, and into other unpleasant customs. Yet Rowlandson, while sullyng his own great gifts, was not really a low and base comedian, but a man of honour, and one of the big masters of our English school. Sir Joshua Reynolds put aside the unseemly caricatures, and gave his attention to the serious work of Rowlandson, pronouncing some of his compositions to be wonders of art that would have done honour to Rubens, or to the most renowned masters of design of the old schools. Nevertheless, the caricatures tell against Rowlandson to this day, and handicap every critic who writes about his genius.

Even Joseph Grego, whose two volumes on Rowlandson have been invaluable since 1880, chose for his title—not "Rowlandson the Artist" but—"Rowlandson the Caricaturist," fearing to clear away all rubbish from an immense output of easy, impulsive, and often reckless high spirits. No Frenchman, not even Daumier, has the amazing spontaneity of Rowlandson at his best, or the mastery of his design and his weight of style. The variety also is bountiful, instantaneous, truly wonderful, showing that Rowlandson's fine sense of drama responds at once to the changing comedy of human life like a great playwright. Sometimes this artist is a soldier watching critically a parade or a review; sometimes a sportsman, hunting, or angling, or shooting; he watches "The Road to the Derby," and sketches rapidly a disappearing procession with a realism unfeigned that Frith's elaborated "Derby Day" failed to get. This genial sketch has also an impression of English fields, trees, hedges, that reveals another of Rowlandson's phases, his fondness

for English countrysides, with their rustic courtships, their harvest seasons, and village festivals, and the garden landscapes, a few hills here and there, just high enough to give by contrast a serener air of luxury to reposeful valleys watered by fishing streams.

Though Rowlandson travelled much up and down England, and also abroad, his worth as a landscapist needs research, because London and her buyers gained too much power over his judgment, though in his day London was only a smallish tyrant. Snipe-shooting could be enjoyed half a mile from Westminster Abbey; and many farms grew corn and hay where our nearer suburbs now devour more green fields, while earthquakes on wheels, called lorries and motor-buses, make home life a nuisance of shocks and noises. Two of Rowlandson's boon companions, Morland sometimes, and sometimes Ibbetson, who put a few incidental fishermen into his rural and rustic scenes, got all that they needed of the country from the nearest villages around London, that unceasing plaque of bricks and mortar. There was no need for Rowlandson to poison his art with detestable urban satire.

In moods of reaction, when he rebelled against this bad habit, his lightest sketch received from his brush a peculiar grace, and also a persuasive serene colour, which Professor Image has described admirably as "a general pearly greyness," "a colour entirely on the side of delicacy, transparency, pearliness, opalescence," with "an amazing truthfulness in its suggestion of atmosphere, of large spaces and distances. His drawings set among other drawings, however strong, tell with brilliancy. If they are faint in actual pigment and tone, they are potent in their general effect. As the saying is, they stand out. Not that he is afraid of a bit of positive colour, when he is so minded. He will paint you a red or blue coat at its brightest, and the miracle is that the red or the blue is altogether in harmony with its quiet surroundings. . . ." ¹

Angling sketches and pictures by this master are uncommon. There are two sketches in outline, very clever and graceful, in Grego's *Rowlandson*, vol. i., pp. 76 and 77; and in the same volume, p. 220, Grego notes how Rowlandson improved another artist's work when he etched a pretty print after Bunbury's "Anglers of 1611." This print I have chosen for a half-page in colour. It was intended by Bunbury as an illustration of *The Compleat Angler*. Piscator is the young man in a green coat who stands on our left, his arms folded across the fishing-rod. Behind, Peter is whipping a stream left-handedly. Venator is seated under a tree with his right arm around Maudlin's waist, while her mother, a sturdy old dame, complains to the mild

¹ *The Burlington Magazine*, October 1908.



NOON. *The last Design, and Draving on Stone, by ROBERT SEYMOUR*
(c. 1800-1836). Published by Ackermann, June 10, 1839. See p. 128. From a
Print in Mr. B. H. Bennett's Collection.

Piscator, who looks too shy to be in Venator's place. All this being unlike Walton, it is better to accept the Bunbury-Rowlandson print as an imaginary composition, with a pretty landscape.

Mr. A. N. Gilbey has two angling pieces by Rowlandson, both typical, but showing his rapid style in very different moods. One of them, "A Snug Angling Party," is reproduced here from a print, and the other from the original drawing.¹ They speak for themselves to every one in sympathy with a master who is always English to the backbone. *See plates facing pp. 136, 174.*

V

It is a great contrast, but not a fall, to go from Rowlandson to Richard Wilson, R.A., a master of many sincere and profound qualities.

Wilson, who began his career as a portrait painter, put incidental anglers into a good many of his pictures. There are two, accompanied by a girl, for example, in his painting of "Snowdon Hill," which William Woollett engraved; and the "Kilgarren Castle," engraved by William Elliott, and published by John Boydell in 1775, has a small but conspicuous angler, who stands erect silhouetted against a background of water.

Though a man of genius, who lived through a period friendly to British art, from 1714 to 1782, Wilson's lot was unfortunate. Certainly he was chosen as a foundation member of the Royal Academy, like his friend and teacher, Francesco Zuccarelli; but his pictures remained neglected, dealers buying them at paltry prices, till at last his poverty was almost unbearable. In 1776 it was a boon to him to be appointed Librarian at the Royal Academy. Later, on receiving a small competence through the death of a brother in North Wales, he retired to Llanberis, and spent there the short remainder of his life.

As Richard Wilson was a fisherman, I wished to find a small angling picture that could be reproduced in colour. His best qualities, aerial truth, exquisite tones of colour, manliness and ease of handling, and a passion for serene waters and skies, lose too much of their charm when engraved and photographed. No British landscapist of his time had so much mastery over his pigments; most of his pictures have worn well. Disappointment and poverty seem to have made him bitter and headstrong. It is related, for instance, that George III commissioned him to paint Kew Gardens, but received an Italianized version of them, which was returned.

¹ The original water-colour of "A Snug Angling Party" has an ornamental bridge in its background on our left, and under it a house-boat of Rowlandson's day, with an awning.

It is odd that Woollett should have spent a great deal of time engraving big prints after Wilson, who had no following. Public taste preferred prints after a scene-painter named Thomas Walmsley, who was born in Dublin, 1763, and who died at Bath in his forty-second year. He painted scenery at Covent Garden and the King's Theatre, London; also for the Crow Street Theatre, Dublin. Walmsley was a keen angler, and it is easy to find scenical prints after his work in which fishermen are active. He painted usually in body-colour, or gouache, opaque colours ground in water and mingled with a preparation of gum; a method of painting that did not take him too far away from the technique of his theatrical workmanship.

In the country, during his holidays, he seems to have looked always for scenes that would look well on drop-curtains and back-cloths. Mr. John Lane has two North of England landscapes painted in gouache by Walmsley; one of them has anglers in it; and both are like studies for drop-curtains. Still, it is interesting to know that one scene-painter was fond of fishing, and used the sport pretty often in his tricky, artificial landscapes.

F. Jukes engraved in aquatint Walmsley's "Corwen Bridge" and "Llangollen Bridge," and both have fishermen. Jukes must have had confidence in his chosen artist, for he published these prints himself, from 10, Howland Street, London, January 30th, 1794. The "Llangollen Bridge" is dedicated to the Prince of Wales, and, thanks to some serious qualities added by Jukes, it is worth buying when a good impression is found. There are three anglers, and one of them wades, though his long coat touches the water. The companion print has two wading fishermen, an uncommon fact in prints of the eighteenth century.

Early engravings of notable bridges have generally some historic value to students, and Paul Sandby united several to angling, with an art high beyond the reach of Walmsley. He was the first English aquatinter,¹ and he employed this form of engraving for his very pleasant design of "The Bridge of Llanrwst in Denbighshire, 1786," a bridge built by Inigo Jones, who employed arch-stones of unequal size, thicker in their haunches than at their crowns. This technical defect helps vibration to circulate; so the bridge shivers under a heavy load, or when a gale of wind strikes it; and a shivering bridge inspires no more confidence than a stammering man. And yet, though the workmanship throughout is very light, Inigo Jones's bridge has come down to our time, hence the proportion of all its parts must have been very well though delicately balanced, like the anatomy of a good racehorse. Paul Sandby

¹ I mean, the first to employ aquatinting for print publication on a commercial scale.



SALMON FISHING. *From an Oil Painting by FRANCIS NICHOLSON, R.W.S. (1753-1844). See p. 132. Note that the Landing-Net is a Dip-Net; it seems to come from Broddingnag. The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.*



BOYS ANGLING, ACCOMPANIED BY THEIR DOG. *From a Water-Colour of 1800, by FRANCIS WHEATLEY, R.A. (1747-1801).. See p. 132. The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.*

was interested greatly, and you will find a fisherman well placed in his aquatint.

He was attracted even more by the great Welsh Bridge at Shrewsbury, whose noble defensive tower frowned towards Wales ; it may have belonged to the reign of Edward I, as a statue of Llewellyn was placed over one of the arches. In a good aquatint published by Sandby in 1778, we see a part of Old Shrewsbury Bridge, with two arches of the new one, and on our left, rightly placed, a busy angler.

I have chosen a Sandby aquatint of 1776, because the angling interest is more noticeably in the foreground ; there is also a dog, one of the earliest at present known to me in what may be called a fishing print. Besides, the old corn and fulling mills at Penywern, near Festiniog, each with its waterfall, and the third fall that flows through Pandy Bridge, form a piece of historic landscape now greatly altered. Sandby is not yet at ease as an aquatinter ; he is making experiments, and the beginnings of an art are always entertaining. This able artist was not " the father of English water-colour," as many writers have supposed ; he was only one of the first painters to practise it out of doors, like Peter Tillemans ; but as a student of social and popular life, who drew and grouped figures admirably, he was more varied than any other of the Royal Academy's foundation members. A monograph of Sandby's art would be of great value to historians, who, as a rule, know very little about graphic and pictorial evidence. All schools for boys and girls should have illustrated monographs of the precious and charming history which artists have bequeathed to us and which our educational authorities have neglected.¹

VI

A good many of Paul Sandby's contemporaries, landscape and figure painters, were attracted now and then by angling, like James Malton (died 1803), Edward Dayes (1763-1804), Tom Hearne (1744-1817), and F. L. T. Francia, a native of Calais, born in 1772, who settled early in London as a water-colourist, borrowed many good hints from Tom Girtin, and as painter to the Duchess of York found many good patrons. After Girtin's death

¹ There are a good many prints that represent Paul Sandby's attitude towards angling in art. There is the "Gresford Cottage, Denbighshire," engraved by W. and J. Walker, for example. In 1779 Valentine Green and F. Jukes engraved a Sandby drawing of a man fishing near a water-mill ; and M. A. Rooker, an able topographer, engraved another, "Colonel Onslow's Lodge at Try Hill, near Chertsey," 1777. Another Sandby, with a man fishing below a tall tree, was engraved by William Elliott. Further, the Print Room of the British Museum has an original drawing by Paul Sandby that is associated with angling, "At Edwinstford, Carnarvon."

Francia's art became weaker, but its best productions remain rich in colour and desirable. The Victoria and Albert Museum has an angling landscape by Francia, with a view of Fonthill Abbey as a background, dated 1804. Edward Dayes, who gave lessons to Girtin, and who wrote interestingly, has had some angling landscapes given to him erroneously, so has Tom Hearne; but these and some other painters, like William Daniell, R.A. (1769-1837), did make use—incidental use—of fishing, every now and then. There is a Hearne angling, for instance, in Hearne and Byrne's *Rural Sports*, 1810. And another important man who helped to lift water-colour out of the littleness of mere topography, William Havell, is worth the search of anyone who desires to follow angling in art into all of its backwaters. William Hamilton, R.A., who lived from 1751 to 1801, is known well to anglers, especially in F. Bartolozzi's oval print of the "April" composition, with boys and girls trying to put some rusticity into the boudoir school of ideal fishing. Gilbert Redgrave said of Hamilton: "His water-colour drawings are tasteful and luminous, but his figures lack character, and his female figures are often tawdry and theatrical." Yet it was not entirely his fault. As we have seen, a very eager taste of his day wanted an idealism of men and women that had less humanity in them than Shakespeare's Oberon and Titania. Even rustics were expected to be dainty and unreal, like Wheatley's and Richard Westall's. No sweat on the brow ever damped the sugar-plum idealism of these toilers in English fields.

One turns always with joy from this false art to the realists and the humorists. From among the latter I have chosen Sir Robert Frankland, Bart., and the caricaturist James Gillray, who designed the print called "Gudgeon Fishing à la Conservatory," published by S. W. Fores, July, 1811. This drawing represents a party given by Sheridan at the Cottage, or Fishing Temple, Virginia Water, in the early part of the nineteenth century, under the presidency of George, Prince of Wales. It will be remembered, perhaps, that Sheridan about 1800 drew up a set of witty and amusing rules for the Walton and Cotton Club, which held convivial meetings at Letchford. One person who cut a pretty figure in Sheridan's Fishing Rules was a too-thirsty angler and Member of Parliament named Joseph Richardson, who had married a kinswoman of Izaak Walton, and who went joyously through high living into an early funeral, dying at the Wheatsheaf Inn, Virginia Water, June 9th, 1803. To the last he was present near the most light-hearted fishing fun that selected Londoners could enjoy without overmuch fatigue by coach and as horsemen.

The gudgeon fishermen shown in the old print do not include Joseph Richardson, but Prince George is there, stout and jolly, a glass of wine in his



QUEDGEON FISHING a la Conventory.

SHERIDAN'S FISHING PARTY, with the Prince of Wales in the Chair. From a *fores Print* after JAMES GILLRAY (1757-1815). Published in 1811. See pages 142, 143. Sheridan died in 1816.

right hand, and the left hand raised with an eloquently soft gesture. He is enthroned on a high official chair, and murmurs to a lady on his right, a princess of the exiled house of France, "Yes, they are a very silly Fish indeed." The lady carries a little banner on which is inscribed, "De Gupon bite more better here den de deû en France." Another banner raised high on the Prince's other side has for its device the words, "They must be d—d silly indeed to be caught in this manner." The central figure is believed to be a caricature of Sheridan, author of the Rules. "Old Sherry," then, is really "uncorked"; the full, bibulous lips really seem to drop with wine; he looks away from the Prince, and says to a military angler who has hooked a fish, and who toasts the Prince of Wales: "With all my heart, my Lord, I have just begun a new fishery for Hats." With his left hand Sherry grasps a roll of paper, labelled "Nominal Subscribers of the Humbug Theatre."

There are other caricatures of George IV angling on Virginia Water, or elsewhere, but this one is by far the most entertaining. It is very well drawn, and no fewer than seven ladies govern the angling. Votes for women were not needed then as energetic virtues for the guidance of statesmanship.

A short article on this print was published by *The Field* on July 30th, 1910, and its final paragraph says:

"In the list of the officials of the Royal Household there figures a Keeper of the Cottage at Virginia Water. The present occupant of the post is Capt. Sir David Nairne Welch, K.C.V.O., R.N., who was born in the fifth year of the reign of George IV [1825], and may almost be said to form a living link between the far-off days of 'Old Sherry' and the present. Sir David Welch taught King Edward VII both to fish and to sail toy boats on the waters over which he still exercises supreme control. He may possibly have initiated King George V into aquatic pursuits. He has certainly sailed on Virginia Water with Edward Prince of Wales, who is exactly seventy years his junior, and represents the fourth generation of the Royal Houses, whose members have honoured the 'Admiral' of Virginia Water with their friendship. The fishing parties at the Cottage are in no sense things of the past. Sir David has served three sovereigns, and lived in the reign of five."

Quite possibly Sir Robert Frankland, Bart., of Thirkleby Hall, Yorkshire, was present now and then with that angling jollity which caused Sheridan to write some Fishing Rules. Sir Robert flourished during those days, and his amusing set of six angling quips and cranks, in the prints and proofs (8 in. by 10½ in.) aquatinted by Charles Turner, were published by Turner in one edition, by Thomas McLean in another, in June, 1823. The prints are inscribed with brief quotations in Latin from Ovid, Horace, and Virgil. Their

fun is not so farcical, not so burlesqued, as are the graphic drolleries of Robert Seymour, and Edward Barnard, and later of Ernest Grisct.

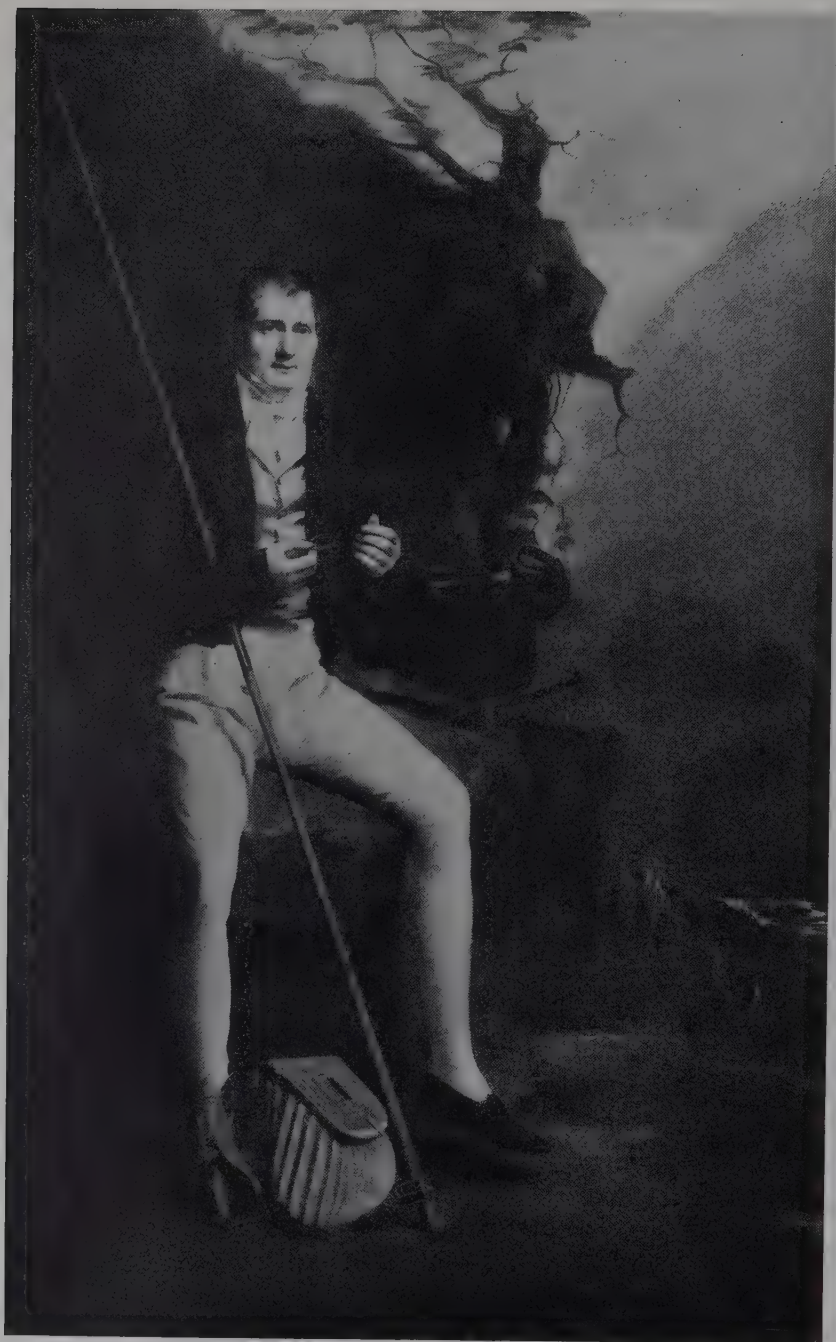
The Print Room of the British Museum has Charles Turner's passed proofs of these Frankland "Delights of Fishing," every proof delicately coloured by hand, and with the chosen quotations carefully written with a pen. A good many printsellers do not know Sir Robert Frankland, and attribute his designs to Charles Turner himself, who was employed by Frankland, and who served him also at an earlier date after Frankland had etched a good hunting series in praise of the Meltonians.

I have seen only one set of the hunting prints bound together in their original wrappers.¹ There are six prints, inscribed *R. F. invt. et fecit. Pub. June 24, 1811, by H. Humphrey, No. 27, St. James's Street.* Their titles: "Going along at a slapping pace," "Topping a flight of rails and coming well into the next field," "Charging an ox fence," "Going in and out clever," "Facing a brook," and "Swishing at a rasper." These things, according to the title-page, are indispensable accomplishments of a good hunter, and "the Meltonians hold every horse cheap which" cannot pass through them rightly. Leicestershire alone, we are told, knows what a first-rate hunter should be and should do. "In vulgar countries (*i.e.* all others) where these accomplishments are not indispensable, he may be a hunter."

Four different hunting subjects by Frankland were published by Charles Turner in 1813 and 1814. Their titles: "Heading the Fox," "Thrown Out," "Taking a Lead—Craning," and "The Southern Hounds, or Hunting in Its Infancy." Altogether, Frankland was an all-round sportsman, and also a notable artist, with qualities at times that cause one to believe that he was a pupil of Henry Alken. I have tried to recover his original drawings, but neither letters to his present-day descendants, nor open letters to Yorkshire and Leicestershire newspapers, have discovered owners.

Sir Robert was born on July 16th, 1784. His father, Sir Thomas Frankland, of Thirkleby Park, Thirsk, was the 6th baronet, and eminent as a man of science, botany being one of his favourite studies. Sir Thomas died on January 4th, 1831; his only son Robert succeeded him; and (we may be sure) continued to unite art and sport and public work. From 1815 to 1834 he was M.P. for Thirsk, and in 1838 High Sheriff of Yorkshire. At the age of thirty-one he married Louisa Anne, third daughter of the Rt. Rev. Lord George Murray, Bishop of St. David's. Lady Frankland lived to 1871, while Sir Robert died on March 11th, 1849, leaving no heir. His

¹ At W. T. Spencer's, New Oxford Street, London.



LT.-COLONEL BRYCE McMURDO, in a Dark Green Coat, swallow-tailed, and Nankeen Pantaloon. *From a life-size portrait by SIR HENRY RAEBURN, R.A. (1756-1823). See p. 130. National Gallery, London. 94in. x 58in.*



ANGLING AND BOUDOIR. IDEALISM. *Engraved by*
F. BARTOLOZZI, R.A. (1728-1815), *after* WILLIAM
HAMILTON, R.A. (1761-1801). *For this phase of fishing, see*
pp. 110, 134, 135, 142, 144, 177.

children were five daughters. The baronetcy passed to a cousin, Sir Frederick William Frankland.

Sir Robert inherited from the Russell family Chequers Court, Bucks, and assumed by sign manual in 1837 the surname of Russell, becoming Sir Robert Frankland-Russell. His art work—all that is at present within reach of the public—is earlier than the date of his father's death; but a man so gifted, whose touch with the etching needle shows careful study, would make a recreation of his art while his health lasted. Hunting families in Leicestershire must have inherited some of Sir Robert's drawings, given to his fellow-Meltonians; and in Yorkshire there must be other examples of his graphic humour, and also of his serious etching. I have advertised for them in vain.

Among the earliest compositions by Sir Robert are some shooting prints, eight in all, engraved by Woodman and Charles Turner, and published at Cambridge by W. D. Jones, Repository of Arts, Market Hill, August, 1813.¹

¹ See Alfred Whitman's Catalogue of Charles Turner's engravings; also the Frankland prints in the British Museum.



From "The Spodnoodle Papers," 1923.

By W. HEATH ROBINSON.

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CHAPTER VI

SOME NEW LIGHT ON THE ALKEN FAMILY

I

MUCH obscurity has hung around this family, leaving its biographies very vague, very scrappy and patchy. The most famous of its members, Henry Alken, who has had no superior yet as a graphic journalist of sport, was thirty in the year of Waterloo. Nine years later, 1824, *Blackwood's Magazine* published a roundabout gossip on him and some others, giving very little biography, but showing that Henry Alken was at home among the Meltonians, and that he drank too much at a tipsy dinner party after he had made himself known as the sporting artist, "Ben Tallyho." How this energetic artist passed from miniature-painting into fashionable sport, to be received as a friend by the Meltonians, we cannot say.¹ He was only four-and-twenty when he married Maria Gordon at St. Clement's Church, Ipswich; and seven years later, when he had children, he published his valuable book, with original coloured plates, on *The Beauties and Defects in the Figure of the Horse comparatively delineated*. We learn from it that he has "been much in the habit of riding young and violent horses with foxhounds." For two seasons, we are told, he rode a very hot mare addicted to buck-leaping; "she was four years old, and excessively violent, although a powerful leaper, as to height and distance. For the first season I had four or five falls a day upon an average, and all in consequence of her violent bucking leaps." Yet he and his wife and children were dependent on his pencil and brush! If his right arm or hand had been crippled by a fall from this mare, Alken's occupation as a journalist of sport would have gone from him and his home. The whole

¹ He studied miniature-painting under J. T. Barber, miniaturist to the Duke of York, who lived at 25, Southampton Street, Strand, London. From this address in 1801, his sixteenth year, he sent a miniature portrait of a Miss Gubbins to the Royal Academy; and next year the R.A. accepted the portrait of a Miss Jackson. As a sporting artist Henry Alken never exhibited at the R.A. Further, not one of the Alkens was an exhibitor at the British Institution, which lasted from 1806 to 1867.



PIKE FISHING. *From an original Water-Colour Drawing by HENRY ALKEN (1785-1851). In the Collection of Major Oswald Magniac.*



SALMON FISHING. *From an original Water-Colour Drawing by HENRY ALKEN (1785-1851). In the Collection of Major Oswald Magniac.*

tone of his book is that of a young hunting squire who is well-to-do. Yet nothing definite can be learnt about his income, and the prices he received from print publishers and from other clients. It is said that he sold his copyrights—a disastrous thing professionally.

No doubt he had good patrons, most notably Mr. Hollingworth Magniac, of Colworth, father of the late Mr. Charles Magniac, M.P., and grandfather of Major Oswald Magniac. It was Mr. Hollingworth Magniac who commissioned the Leicestershire series of small oil-paintings, besides much other work, and his friendship was particularly helpful to Henry Alken after the artist's health broke, becoming consumptive. But although Alken and his prints had won unrivalled popularity, financial failure closed steadily around him, and he died very poor, and seemingly forsaken, like a broken-down thoroughbred, on April 8th, 1851.

Then there is the eldest son, Henry Gordon, who very often copied his father's manner, and whom many regard as a forger. He died in London at the age of eighty-two, in the year 1892. At the last he received parochial relief. There are goodish prints after his pictures, like those by Hunt, which are signed as by Henry Alken, junior; and I have seen several pictures by him, signed H. Alken, or Henry Alken, which were *not at all* like his father's; they showed that, had he wished, he could have gone ahead on his own account, saying with Palmerston: "I like to make a stroke off my own bat." It is to be feared that, in much other work, he did act fraudulently.

No person knows when Henry Gordon Alken dropped his second Christian name. He may have done it now and then during his father's lifetime, remembering that his father had never used his own full signature, Henry Thomas Alken. If the elder Henry had become known as Henry T. Alken much trouble would have been avoided, probably, for his son's copies and imitations would have needed real forgery to make them at all marketable as work by H. T. A.

II

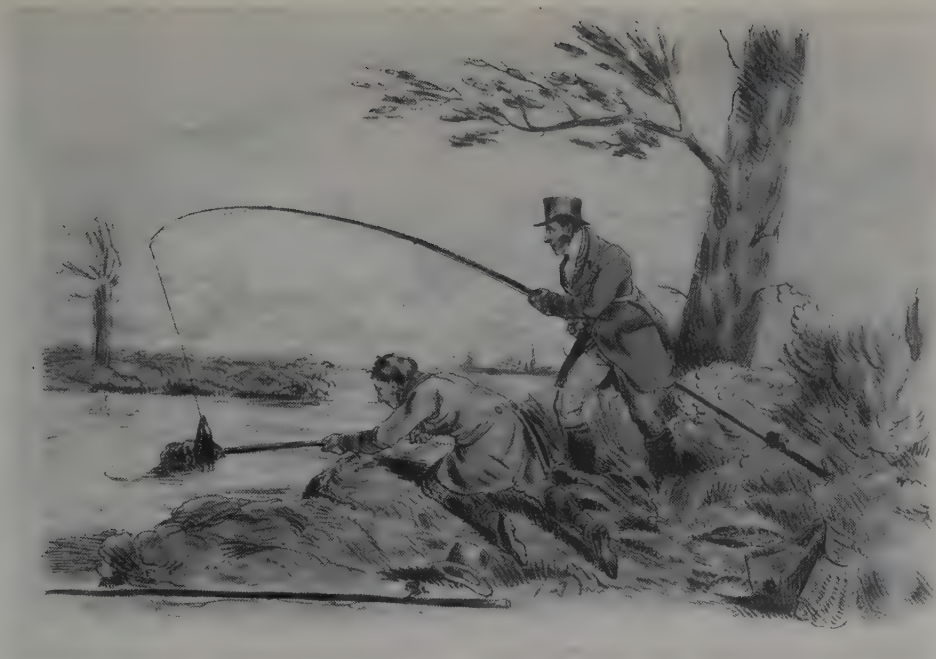
Then there are two Samuel Alkens, if not three, and confusion has collected around them also. The late Sir Walter Gilbey, who based his account on the evidence of two Alkens, the senior Henry's grandchildren, assumed that the elder Samuel was the elder Henry's uncle, who united original sporting prints and pictures to aquatints done generally after the work of other artists.¹

¹ Pray note these points. Their connection with some new information will be seen later. See Gilbey's *Animal Painters*, vol. i.

As for the younger Samuel, has he been swallowed up by the elder Samuel's—his father's—reputation? If so, did he make it a rule to sign his work "S. Alken, junr."? Further, did the father put senior after his name as soon as his boy Samuel began to work professionally as an artist?

Last year, at Messrs. Vicars', of Bond Street, London, eight tinted pencil drawings were signed "S. Alken, junr.": a fact not frequent enough in his work. They illustrated with a "chic" touch the Stockbridge races; their style looked immature, and also handicapped by its Alkenish traits; the impulse and animation of genius were absent. Are we to give to him a great deal of work bearing the name "S. Alken" only, like the oil-painting which I have chosen for a coloured plate, and which seems to belong to the same local school out of which W. Jones developed his fishing landscapes? There are also Alkenish oil-paintings not signed at all, or signed merely Alken. To whom do they belong? Who painted them? I have chosen two examples, placing one below W. Jones's "Fishing for Pike," and another, by way of contrast, above an original aquatint by Paul Sandby, R.A. Though they belong to the day-by-day variety of angling pictures, they have a decorative feeling for landscape, and both, somehow, anyhow, have been attributed here and there to Henry Alken the First. Gilbey (in his book on *Animal Painters*, vol. i.) tells us that there were *two* George Alkens; that both had a taste for art, and that the senior George, one of Henry Alken's brothers, was an artist of considerable ability. It has never been my lot to see one of his signed pictures, but some of the unsigned paintings in the Alken family manner must be by him. The younger George, a son of the senior Henry Alken, painted in water-colour; he was born in 1812, and fifty years later he was found dead in the Thames at Woolwich.

Again, according to family traditions collected by Gilbey, these painters were of Danish origin, and their original surname was Seffrien. The Seffriens lived at Copenhagen, working in some way or other for the Court. Their sovereign was—or may have been—Christian VII, a weak man whose reign began in 1746, passed through gathering troubles, and ended at last in madness, 1784. One very grave crisis occurred in 1772, when a plot formed by the queen dowager against the queen of Christian VII, sister of our George III, triumphed; the queen was imprisoned in the castle of Zell, and her supposed lover, Struenzee, was beheaded. Either then, or earlier, the Seffriens endangered themselves by being active politicians; and for this reason, after changing their name to Alken, they came over to England, settled first in Suffolk, then travelled to London, and took a house in Francis



PIKE FISHING. *From a Print published in 1817, and attributed to SAM ALKEN, JUNIOR (1784-C. 1828). The Print lent by Messrs. Fores.*



ANGLERS NEAR THE PENYWERN MILLS, FESTINIOG,
with the Waterfall flowing down from Pandy Bridge, 1776.
*From an Original Aquatint by PAUL SANDBY, R.A. (1725-1809).
See pp. 140, 141. The Print lent by W. T. Spencer, London.*

Street, Tottenham Court Road. Note that the great Alken, Henry Thomas, was born in 1785, a year after the mad Christian VII needed a regent, Prince Frederick of Denmark.

Now a family tradition of this dramatic nature cannot be invented as a family joke, or myth; nor can it be forgotten by the family's generations; it grips the memory of young and old. Many of its minor interests, such as dates and places of abode, are likely to become confused, inaccurate, for stories repeated in talk are likely to be altered by freakish memories; but the main outlines will remain true. It may have been in Christian VI's reign, not in that of the seventh Christian, that Seffriens altered their name and came to England; and this possibility brings us to some new details which were published recently about the Alkens and their sporting prints.

The details have not yet been verified by several researchers, but they come from a diligent student, Mr. George Kendall; and it is my duty to speak of them. They throw—not a sudden bull's-eye light on many obscurities, but—a fitful and patchy light, very welcome, and yet very tiresome. It goes out precisely at those points where the illumination is needed most of all, as we shall see. Mr. Kendall's research will be found in *The Bookman's Journal and Print Collector*, July 1923.

Finders of new facts, as all researchers know, are likely to overshoot their aim and target, becoming too scornful towards fallacies in accepted history, as well as too proud of their fresh information, as though fallacy and truth were not generally mixed together by human minds and characters. Mr. Kendall overstates the value of his "finds," and is too confident in some other ways. His article would have been more impressive and more useful if he had put his few discovered facts coldly and bluntly in a genealogical table. Then their gappiness would have bothered him greatly, and he would have seen that the late Sir Walter Gilbey's research is richer, and not more gappy, than his own. Gilbey took a great deal of pains, aided by practised researchers, and the Danish tradition remains very important. How to unite it to the new and scattered facts is a thing for future research to decide.

Meantime, let us examine and cross-examine Mr. Kendall's paper.

III

It begins with the year 1745, when a *Seffrien* Alken and his wife *Anne* became tenants of a newly-built house, No. 3, Dufours Court, Carnaby Market, Soho, London. They paid rates to the overseers of the parish of St. James's

within the liberty of Westminster. Now, in 1746 the reign of Christian VI of Denmark ended.

Seffrien Alken was a carver and gilder, perhaps also a maker of picture frames, and he and a brother, Oliver Alken, were partners, plying their crafts "probably," says Mr. Kendall, in Little Titchfield Street. Seffrien and Oliver may have had brothers, and these brothers may have had artistic sons bearing family Christian names, such as Seffrien, Oliver, Samuel, Henry, for a family "tree" has usually many branches. Mr. Kendall does not say whether Seffrien and Oliver had brothers, and their parents also are unknown. So a genealogical table has an indefinite beginning.

The baptismal name Seffrien not only recalls to memory the Danish tradition that Gilbey got from descendants of the Alken family ; it suggests also that the Seffriens may have fled from Copenhagen in the reign of the sixth Christian, not in that of the seventh. Oliver Alken died in 1769, leaving two surviving children, a daughter *Anne*, who married a John Richter, and a son *Seffrien*, who died at sea in 1778, aged twenty-four. Was this other Seffrien married, and did he leave a son ? If so, what was the child's name ? Was it Samuel, for instance ?

Mr. Kendall overlooks these questions, which are suggested to me partly by drawing a genealogical table. After speaking of Oliver's children, Mr. Kendall says :

"Seffrien and Anne brought into the world a number of Alkens—Samuel, Mary, Anne, Oliver [Oliver II], and Martin were some of them."

This refers to Seffrien I and his wife Anne ; but let us be curious also about the senior Oliver's descendants, because certain things cause me to think that there may have been *three* Samuel Alkens, two descended from Seffrien I, and the other from his brother Oliver, or from another relative at present unknown.

Seffrien I died in 1782, at 3, Dufours Court, and the house was taken on by a son, whose name was Samuel, and who became the father of two artists, Samuel II, born on April 10th, 1784, and Henry Thomas, born on October 12th, 1785. Hitherto 1784 has been accepted generally as the date of Henry Alken's birth.

This information, then, is new ; and it gives us also the kinship of Henry Alken with two Samuels. Unluckily, Mr. Kendall's new light does not discover either when or where the elder Samuel was born. Gilbey gives the year as *about* 1750 ; Mr. Kendall has chosen the same date ; but a later time could have been chosen reasonably, because either this Samuel Alken or a



FISHING FOR PIKE. *An Oil Painting by WILLIAM JONES. The A. N. Gilbey Collection. See pages 131, 132.*



LANDING A FISH. *From an Oil Painting (16in. x 12in.) of The Alken School, perhaps by SAMUEL ALKEN, JUNIOR (1784-C. 1823). The Photograph lent by Messrs. Knoedler.*

relative with the same name, in 1780, exhibited as an architect at the Royal Academy, giving his address as 3, Dufours Court, Carnaby Market. Now Mr. Kendall describes the elder Samuel as an engraver, and an architect of thirty should not change his profession, choosing another as difficult, and not as a rule so well paid—aquatinting for books and for print publishers. There was no lack of building work to be done in London, and it was not unprofitable.

Yet Samuel Alken the architect may have become Samuel Alken the aquatinter, because some aquatints of 1785, after drawings by Wigstead and Rowlandson, were done by a Samuel Alken, and published from 3, Dufours Court.

This evidence appears to be good, but not decisive, since we do not know whether Oliver I and Seffrien I had a brother with a son named Samuel. If so, whether this son ever had rooms at 3, Dufours Court, his uncle's house. Not all pictures and drawings have been sent to exhibitions from the producers' own homes, as Henry Alken proved when he sent a miniature to the Royal Academy.

When Mr. Kendall speaks of the elder Sam's first appearance as an engraver, he employs the words "as *early* as 1785." As early? If we are to accept 1750 as the probable year for the elder Samuel's birth, then thirty-five is not early; it is almost middle-age; and, further, Samuel Alken's eldest child, Anne, was born in 1782; so we must assume that architecture seemed good enough then to justify marriage.

If the aquatinter and the architect are to be regarded as the same person, then Henry Alken's father either entered a new and hazardous craft when he was over thirty, or was born considerably later than 1750. Was he born in Denmark? The Danish tradition did not arise out of mere fiction, and Samuel's parents may have visited Copenhagen, sub-letting their home in London, and leaving Oliver Alken to manage the business.

Turning now to the children of Samuel I. The eldest child, Anne, died in her tenth year, 1792. A year later another daughter was born, and baptized Lydia. Sorrow came with her; the poor baby was blind.¹ Three years later a boy came into the world, Seffrien John, who had a love of art, also a studio, so Gilbey learnt; and a fourth son—who shared the studio for a time with Seffrien John—was named George. There was also a daughter Elizabeth. The father, then, gave hostages enough to the profession of aquatinting, if he neither painted nor gave lessons.

¹ Gilbey says that Lydia lived for many years at Childrey, near Wantage, dying in 1880, aged 87.

The younger Samuel's life, so far as it is known, is called "obscure" by Mr. Kendall; mysterious and confusing would have been a better description. The dates in Mr. Kendall's account of his work include only four years, through 1820, when Samuel II was *thirty-six*, to December of 1823, when he "seems to have disappeared from human ken." Many of the works now given to him by Mr. Kendall "deal with sport as it was known in the fashionable night clubs of London frequented by the 'Bucks' who figured so prominently in the social life of the Regency." Well, how had Sam II lived through earlier years?

Mr. Kendall answers: "Gilbey informs us that Samuel Alken was at one period of his life tutor to the Earl of Clarendon, and was somewhat of a dandy in his dress. If these are facts the probability is that the younger Samuel was that man, and he may have imbibed his dandyism, and his intimacy with the night life of London, among the young 'bloods' with whom he would come into contact. It is not clear when he began to paint pictures to sell. Nearly all his signed work is subsequent to the death of his father, and most of it between 1820 and 1823. . . ."

Concerning this quotation we may say that it adds guessing to the information collected by Sir Walter Gilbey. Very little being known about the elder Samuel's life, we have no reason to think it probable that he never earned money for his family by tutoring the Earl of Clarendon. The tutoring may have been lessons of art; artists in those days, and long afterwards, were drawing masters also, far more often than not. And consider another point. The Sam Alken I in Gilbey's research is Henry Alken's uncle; he is Henry's father in Mr. Kendall's new information. How odd it is that this relationship was unknown to Henry's grandchildren, whom Gilbey consulted! Mr. Kendall overlooks this point. Gilbey heard that the elder Sam was about twenty-two when he came to England from Denmark. Was there a third Sam Alken?

Then there is the question, Did the elder Samuel produce any original sporting prints and pictures? We have no documentary evidence, not even a complete list of his aquatints. So we cannot say that he did enough work as an engraver and as an etcher to keep him busy and to support his family. Mr. Kendall may have compiled a complete catalogue for his own private use, but we are not told so; and yet he says that the elder Samuel—

"was an engraver pure and simple. . . . He aquatinted some sporting scenes painted by other artists, but was not a sporting artist, nor is it the



DIBBING FOR CHUB. *From an Oil Painting signed S. DAVID. See p. 126. Illustrated in Walton's "Angler," edition of 1822; proof engraving advertised in Gosden's Catalogue for 2s. 6d. The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.*



FISHING IN A PUNT. *From an Aquatint in Colour by J. CLARK after HENRY ALKEN, for the Folio Edition of Alken's "British Sports."*



FLY-FISHING DIFFICULTIES. Drawn and engraved by HENRY ALKEN (1785-1851). *An Illustration to his Quarto on British Sports, 1824.*



BOTTOM FISHING. Drawn and Engraved by HENRY ALKEN (1785-1851). *An Illustration to his Quarto on British Sports, 1824.*

least likely that he was a sportsman after the manner of his two sons. As regards sporting prints, broadly speaking the father and son are represented according to the position of the name on the inscription space. The father takes the right side, and the son the left."

Proof is needed here. Not yet have we a right to be confident. At present the best advice a writer can offer his readers is this : Regard chosen examples of work by the Alkens as their biographies, leaving research to specialized students. Mr. Kendall has done much, but a great deal more remains to be done.

The younger Samuel, in the few years covered by his reputed work—I give an example of the year 1817—is exceedingly versatile for a man of his ability ; his choice of subjects includes shooting, fishing, coursing, hunting, racing, badger-baiting, cock-fighting, otter-hunting, scenes of George IV's visit to Dublin, and " sport as it was known in the fashionable night clubs of London. . . ." One of his markets, or assumed markets, was a magazine that ran into thirteen volumes, from 1822—*The Annals of Sporting and Fancy Gazette*.

Finally, Mr. Kendall says of the elder Samuel :

" Paintings and drawings attributed to Samuel Alken are constantly exhibited in the windows of picture-dealers and on the walls of salerooms, bearing the inscription *Samuel Alken, 1750-1825*. It would be more correct, *Samuel Alken, junior, 1784-1823*, for it is open to doubt whether the generally recognized Samuel Alken ever painted a picture in his life. . . ."

Evidence is needed here. What confusion could have arisen if the Sam Alkens had formed the habit of signing their work correctly, using invariably the words *senior* and *junior* to keep themselves apart in the public mind ? Take, by way of example, the Sam Alken plates—twenty-six of them—published by *The Annals of Sporting*, 1822 and 1823, and engraved by T. Sutherland, J. Gleadale, and Percy Roberts. Does Mr. Kendall believe that Gilbey would have given them to the elder man if they had been signed " S. Alken, junior " ?

Not one of them has this inscription ; and while the inscription under four coloured prints is S. Alken, it is S. Alkin under nineteen.¹ Under one print it is simply Alken, and under another Alkin.

Whenever the text of the magazine names the artist, S. Alken is printed ;

¹ S. Alkin occurs eight times in vol. i., five times in vol. ii., twice in vol. iii., and four times in vol. iv.

and one reads several times that the print is "drawn and engraved by S. Alken." When this happens, the text of the book is at variance with the inscription under the print.

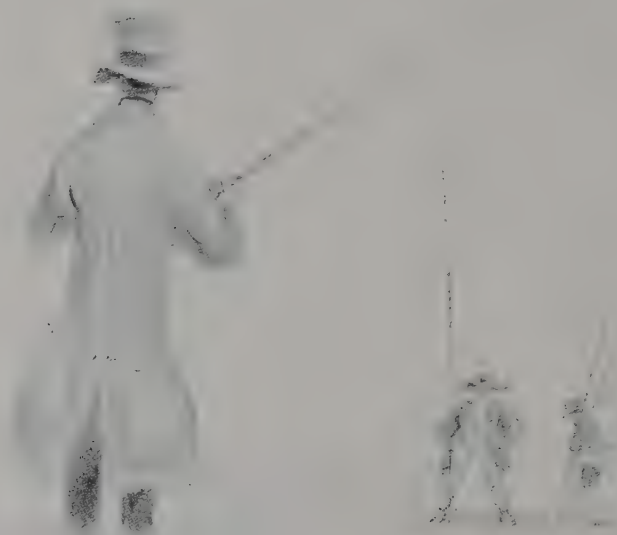
These facts do not appear in Mr. Kendall's article, and certainly they cannot make the Alken labyrinth less bothering to researchers.

To look for a third S. Alken is, I believe, the next step to be taken.



From "The Spodnoodle Papers," 1923.

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A MEMBER OF THE HOUGHTON FISHING CLUB. *From the Humorous Pencil Drawing by J. M. W. TURNER, R.A. (1775-1851.) Drawn for this famous Club to illustrate its Annals, and published in Sir Herbert Maxwell's Chronicles of the Houghton.*

CHAPTER VII

SOME BOOKS BY ARTIST-ANGLERS

I

EDWARD HAMILTON, who lived from 1815 to 1903, was sixty-nine when he published his *Recollections of Fly-Fishing for Salmon, Trout, and Grayling* enriched with a mezzotint by Francis Seymour Haden, and with five woodcuts after his own sketches. One little cut is of sea-trout fishing in the River Elchaig, Ross-shire. A lonely angler, wading upstream, is in the act of playing a lusty fish that leaps to the surface with a splash. Another small cut, with a sky full of wind and cloud and streaking sunlight, shows two anglers on the bankside, left, under tall trees, with a couple of boats drawn up on shore, and a ghillie at work by the side of the more distant one. This composition is Loch Ailt, Inverness-shire; the fishermen are incidental. The River Test at Long Parish, the third woodcut, is without a fisher; its waders are cattle, that cool themselves drowsily in the water. We pass on to the Kennet, and see a fly-fisher in the pool below Ramsbury Bridge. The biggest arch is sluiced; but water comes pouring in small cascades through the other three arches. A pleasant composition, English through and through, it helps us to understand why painters accustomed to Scottish angling rivers and lochs find the fishing scenery in England too tamed, even too *educated*. The fifth cut is another bridge scene, one at Leintwardine, with a bankside fisherman in the middle distance.

For an amateur artist Hamilton does his work well; his illustrations *do* illustrate five of his favourite fishing places. Also, when I look at them I remember that it was he who compiled a good *catalogue raisonné* of engraved works after Reynolds, and who did more than anyone else to establish the old Dudley Gallery for the exhibition of pictures by unknown young artists. For a long time Hamilton's collection of mezzotints was one of the best in England.

Hamilton and Seymour Haden were intimate friends; as artists, and fly-fishers, and medical men. For this little book of 190 pages, Haden

engraved in mezzotint a small frontispiece full of character, measuring $6\frac{3}{8}$ in. by $4\frac{1}{4}$ in. It is called "A Salmon Pool on the Spey." The sun is going down behind the distant hills, and a glow of light comes pouring through a break in wind-blown and stormy clouds. The river flows towards us bending, illuminated with splashes of light. On our left is a foreground of dark rocks, and in the middle distance, across the water, a fly-fisher is dimly seen on the bankside near shadowy trees; a mere spot of a man in a grim and vast landscape. There is no need for his presence; he is there, with a rod that is too visible, only because Haden made a wrong concession to the book's title, forgetting that the Spey's reputation in the history of angling would carry his art into fly-fishing without help from a spot to denote a distant fisherman, and a long black line to represent a rod. Mr. D. Y. Cameron, R.A., has made no concession to the rod and line in his deep and rich etching of another far-famed salmon haunt, Hell's Hole on the Tay, near Stanley, and also near Stobhall, where John Bright used to throw his fly after the cares of political contests.

To know when to leave out the act of fishing is among the many problems which artist-anglers study, and which ordinary anglers should view sympathetically. It is the old problem of raising historical topography into art, while omitting the human actions by which it has been made historical. Turner served a travelling apprenticeship to this earlier topography, like his friend Girtin; and Sir John Millais, in a fishing picture, "Murthly Water," tried to carry on the tradition, but in a manner too photographic.¹ His landscape has not a trace of that deeply serene and impressive poetry which D. Y. Cameron in his oil-paintings has given to angling lochs and rivers. Millais puts some fishing interest on the bankside, but it does no good to his picture, because his large landscape is not seen and painted with imaginative fervour. Mr. D. Y. Cameron, on a canvas only a yard long by eighteen inches high, has achieved the poetry of Scotland, just by loving the little loch of Chon on a glorious evening, when a wonderful peace in Nature is freed from all human activity except his own pleasure as a delighted guest. Every angling loch in Scotland has hours of this memorable sort, when the presence of a fisherman seems like an offence against Nature, and art, and sportsmanship.

Seymour Haden thought over this matter, as his fishing prints bear

¹ This work by Millais is in the Pandeli Ralli Collection. After a long search for it I was disenchanted to find that it harmed a great man's reputation; a sad thing when a great man is passing through that reaction which often begins two or three years after his death, and lasts a long time.



"I wonder what fly will suit them to-day." *From a Portrait Sketch in Pencil by T. TOOKE. Drawn for The Houghton Fishing Club. See pp. 170-174.*

witness ; and Edward Hamilton, a keener fly-fisher even than Haden, preferred incidental anglers to the more human and active appeal that Robert and James Pollard chose for their fishing prints and paintings. Variety of contrasts being invaluable, a collection of angling in art needs the Cameronian moods as well as the Pollardarian ; and sometimes the two are found mingled together, as in John MacWhirter's bare-legged young Celt playing his fish in the Isle of Skye, with a storm gathering around him in a landscape that looks menacingly ancient.

II

When we turn to Edward Hamilton as a writer on angling, we come upon one of those brave, true, genial-hearted men of the nineteenth century to whom the reproach "too Victorian" has been applied by modernists. A more open-minded writer on sport one does not wish to meet, as a rule. He has just enough whims to make him lovable as a man of a day, and quite enough wisdom to make him of permanent help to all students of the periods in angling literature. Though the book of his recollections is a brief one, it is stored with forty years of sporting pleasure ; and to its author's experience on rivers and lakes are added quite enough good notes from his reading. Perhaps he says overmuch about the natural history of grayling, trout, sea trout, and salmon. More about his own enterprise as a fly-fisher, and less about natural history, would be more welcome, perhaps, for Hamilton is among those gentle-faced Victorians, with dropping whiskers (not Dunderreary whiskers, like those of H. L. Rolfe, but shorter), who had much pugnacity when he was roused by opposition. Portraits of Hamilton are free from all trace of sternness, such as we find in Jacob Huysman's painting of Izaak Walton ; but he shows in his waders a dogged energy which might seem undignified in *The Compleat Angler*, whose second title is *The Contemplative Man's Recreation*. Do you ever wish to call up before your mind a picture of Walton wading deep across a river in order to thrust his hand and arm into a water-worn old rat-hole into which a large hooked trout has run for safe shelter ?

Another book by an artist-angler, T. C. Hofland's *The British Angler's Manual* (first edition, 1839), was among the works that Hamilton studied as a young man. Hofland was greatly attracted by the art of fly-making ; he painted thirty-nine examples, and W. R. Smith engraved them beautifully on steel. To look at these plates of artificial flies is fascinating ; but to see

this art at its middle-period perfection we must consult Ronalds' *Fly-Fisher's Entomology* (1844), and study its very good coloured impressions of forty-six flies for grayling and trout. Modernists should not boast about fly-making till they know the exquisite work chosen by Ronalds and Hofland.¹ Hofland writes of some others, giving in all a list of some forty-six flies for trout and grayling. One of Hamilton's favourite flies was called the Hofland, and he says also : " In my early days of fly-fishing I furnished a book with a complete set of his (Hofland's) flies. I found about fourteen good for general use ; the others might now and then kill a fish, so will any fly." ² After fishing during forty years in the South of England, Hamilton settled down on a limited number of flies, giving two sizes to most of them ; and some he dressed on No. 16 hook. His special favourites were the Palmer Hackles. The Red Palmer and the Soldier Palmer he dressed on No. 11 and 14 hooks. His other flies were the March Brown, the Red Spinner, the Alder or Owl Fly (dressed with wings, and also as a hackle) ; the Chantry, the Governor, the Green Drake, the Hofland, the Coachman, the Cock-a-Bondhu, or Marlow Bugg ; the Sedge or Major Fly, for the Kennet in July and August ; the Black Gnat, and the Dark Claret Spinner.

Of the Duns Hamilton chose the Blue one, the Carshalton Cocktail, the Hare's Ear, the Yellow Dun in three shades, and the Quill Gnats ; the Wickham's Fancy and Whitchurch Dun, with other Test flies ; finally, the Iron Blue.

This list has about as many items as we find in the choice of flies in Cotton's practice, or in that of Thomas Barker, whose book on *The Art of Angling* was published in 1651, 1657, and 1659. It is a longer list than the famous jury of twelve flies which was given to Walton, so Walton tells us, " by an ingenuous brother of the angle, an honest man, and a most excellent fly-fisher." ³ It's a pity this honest and ingenuous friend of Walton's was left unnamed, for the jury of artificial flies did not belong to his honesty ; it came from a fifteenth-century book which Walton ought to have quoted with acknowledgment, just as he named Thomas Barker, a little later, in some other directions for fly-fishing and about the Palmer Flies, and the Hawthorne Fly, the Oak Fly, and a fly made with a peacock's feather.

In a later chapter I shall put in parallel columns the dozen hand-made

¹ Mr. R. B. Marston has always been a firm supporter of Ronalds. In 1834 the third edition of George C. Bainbridge's *Fly Fisher's Guide* was published, another interesting middle-period book.

² Hamilton's *Recollections*, p. 140.

³ Hamilton, p. 144.

flies as described by Walton and Dame Bernes. At present we are concerned, in a broad survey, with the changeful use of the art of making flies, while noting that Edward Hamilton, after testing a superabundance of artificial lures, moved rapidly back towards that small number—the twelve commandments of practical fly-making, which the earliest printed book on English fishing had handed down to the days of Mascall, and Barker, and Walton. The usual evolution of a craft is from frugality into superabundance, and back towards economy. Hofland endowed fish with a critical faculty and a discriminating love of colour which even a great many men do not possess; hence a full half of his beautiful flies, when tested by Hamilton, had no value in practice. Hamilton does not say that he ever tried an artificial fly fashioned in the primitive manner; but he asks anglers to hate “the evil propensity of constant change”; is certain “that *colour* often beats exact *imitation*”; and says that many trout flies “seem to be invented by tackle makers, or crotchety anglers, who observe little and know less about the fish they wish to catch.”

In one day of fine sport his bait is a bit of tin which he has cut from a paint-tube: an empty tube, I suppose, with the smell of pigment coming from it.

Edward Hamilton's views on Walton are nearer to R. B. Marston's than to those of some other experts. Let me choose Andrew Lang's. To what extent is *The Compleat Angler* antiquated? Mr. Marston has answered this question fully, and his thoughtful examination has been approved in the main by Mr. Hugh T. Sheringham, Angling Editor of *The Field*.¹ The conclusion is that Walton owes his unfading popularity to the fine art with which he blends together his appeal as a pastoral poet and his real value as a writer of sound angling precepts, founded on experience. Mr. Marston says of himself that he has read practically every work ever written about angling, and yet he can truly say that he has learned more about the ways of our British fish and their haunts and habits and how to catch them, from Walton and Cotton, than from any subsequent writers. He adds: “Of course one learns most from actual experience; but Walton had a wonderful manner of describing ways of fish and ways of taking them.” Yes, no doubt; but, on the other hand, the ways of our British fish include their natural history, and Walton seems to have faith in some wondrous myths.

Edward Hamilton would not have agreed on all points with Mr. Marston; and if he ever talked of Walton to Andrew Lang there must have been many

¹ Mr. Marston's 1915 edition of Walton's *Angler* (Oxford University Press), pp. xix-xxxv.

a brisk controversy, for Lang had a poor opinion of Walton's technical knowledge. To him *The Compleat Angler* was a poem, a book for human enjoyment, not for instruction.

Lang believed that Walton's craft was bottom-fishing only. "Izaak was no fly-fisher at all," he wrote.¹ Yet Walton not only wrote with a personal relish on fly-fishing for grayling, he implied even that he had tried his hand at fly-making. Consider this passage :

"I confess, no direction can be given to make a man of a dull capacity able to make a fly well : and yet I know this, with a little practice, will help an ingenuous angler in a good degree. But to see a fly made by an artist in that kind, is the best teaching to make it. . . ."

Again, Lang continues : "Walton absurdly bids us 'let no part of the line touch the water, but the fly only'"; whereas Walton says something different. His words are cautious :

"and when you fish with a fly, *if it be possible*, let no part of your line touch the water, but your fly only ; and be still moving your fly upon the water ; or casting it into the water, you yourself being also always moving down the stream."

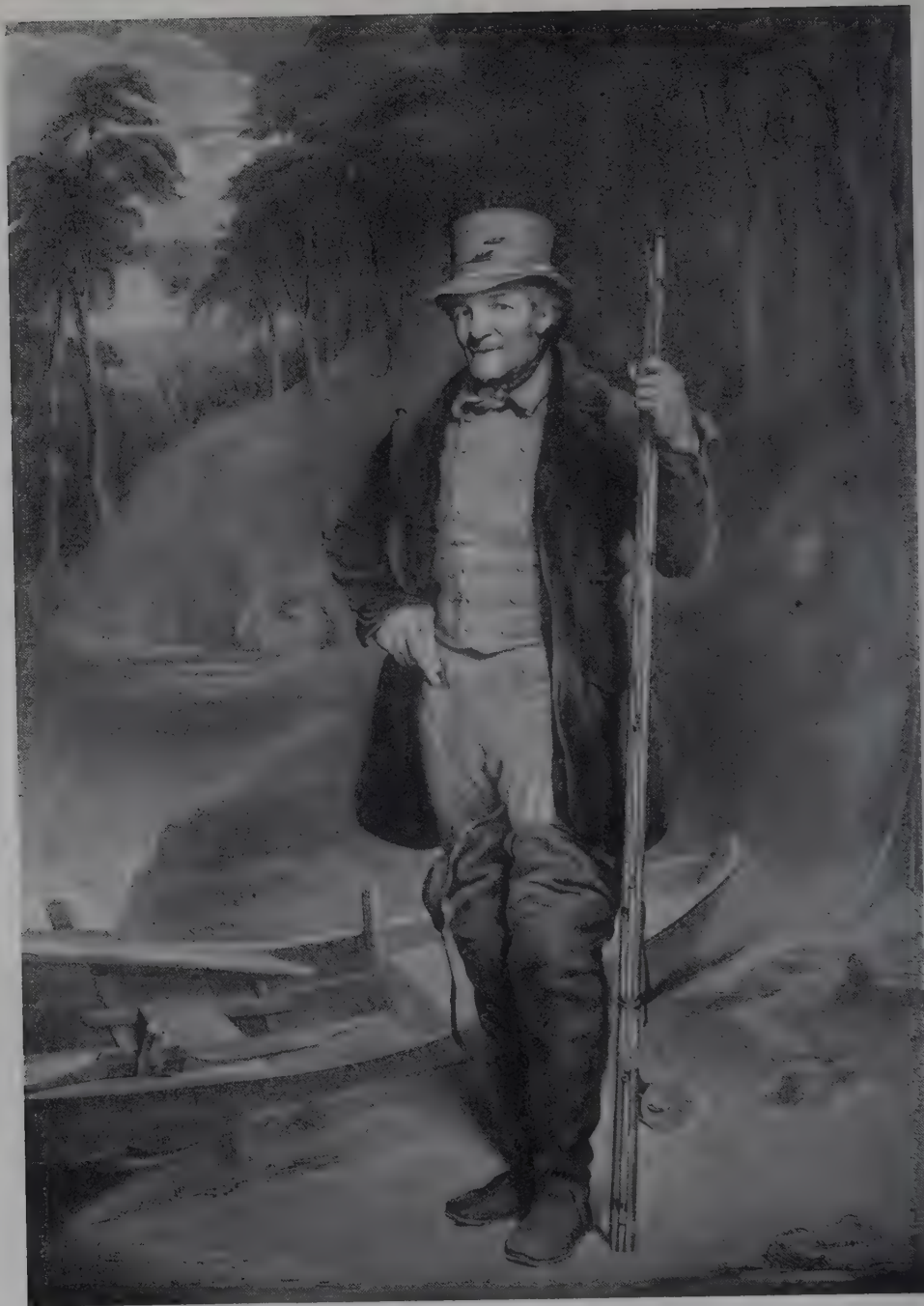
Lang goes on to complain that Walton, like Thomas Barker, insists on fishing downstream, "which is, of course, the opposite of the true art, for fish lie with their heads upstream, and trout are best approached from behind." Concerning this criticism five things can be said :

1. If Andrew Lang had studied *The Experienced Angler, or Angling Improved*, an invaluable little book written by Colonel Venables, and brought out in 1662 by Marriott, with a commendatory letter by Walton, he would have known that upstream and downstream fishermen had a controversy, and that Venables reviewed it (pp. 99-100 of his book), and gave his vote to the downstreamers. His reasons are worth quoting, after we have noted what Venables has said in a much earlier page (p. 37) about the art of casting :

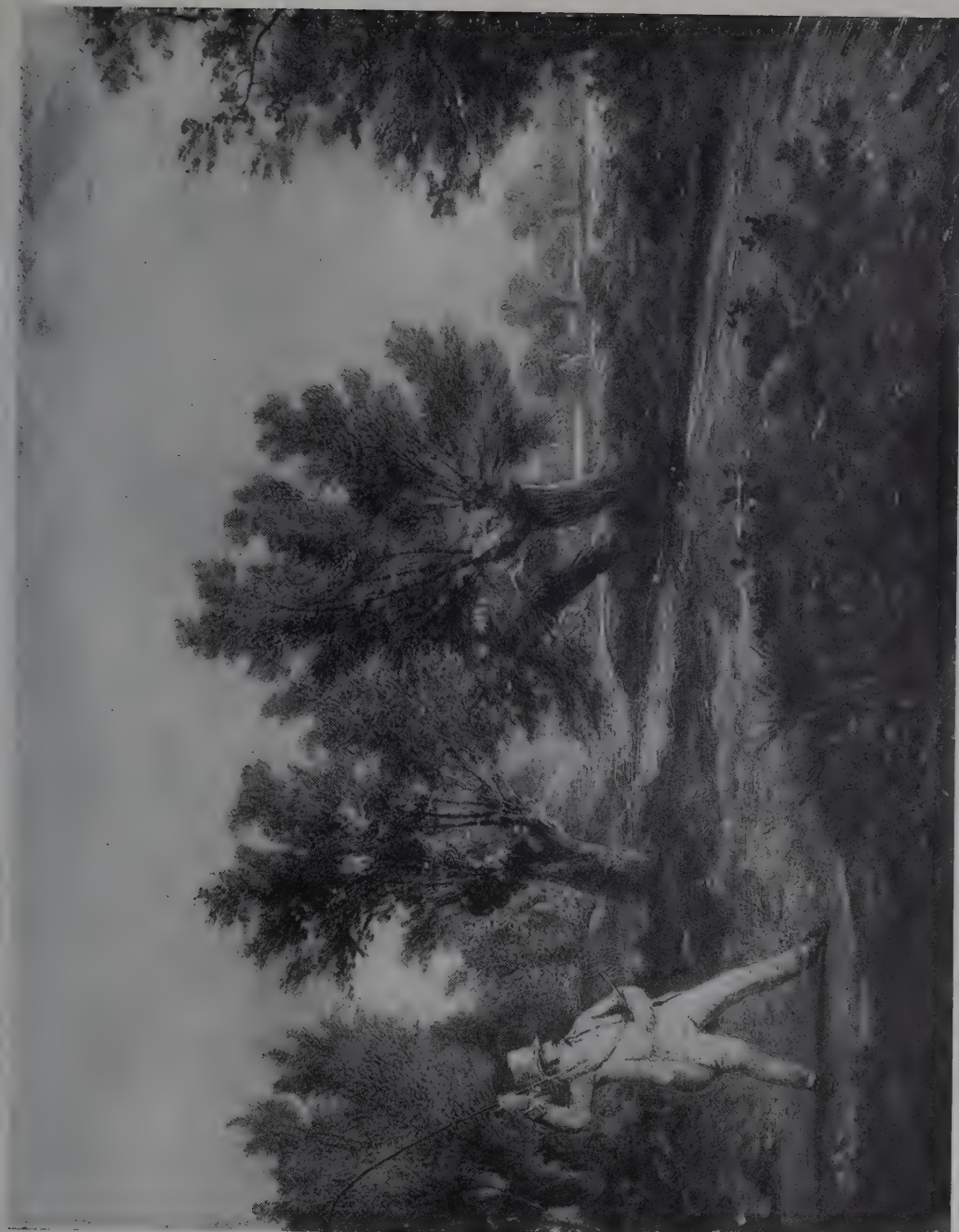
"Be sure in casting that your fly fall first into the water ; if the line fall first, it scareth the fish ; therefore draw it back, and cast again, that the fly may fall first."

Next, after accepting "the fine and far off" axiom—which, by the way, is plainly suggested in the fifteenth-century treatise—Venables says :

¹ The Lang and Sullivan edition of *The Compleat Angler*, 1896 (Dent, London), p. xlv.



"ROB O' THE TROWS," Fisherman to Lieut-Gen. Sir Thomas M. BRISBANE, BART., of Makersta on Tweed. *Lithographed by C. Cousens after a Painting by R. FRAIN (p — p). Nothing is known about Frain. The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.*



FLY-FISHING: The Act of Casting From an Oil Painting by
W. JONES, 1834. See pp. 131, 132, and facing p. 166, a Colour-plate.
The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.

"Therefore by all means keep out of sight, either by sheltering yourself behind some bush or tree, or by standing so far off the river's side that you can see nothing but your fly or float ; to effect this, a long rod at ground, and a long line with the artificial fly, may be of use to you. And here I meet with two different opinions and practises ; some always cast their fly and bait up the water, and so they say nothing occurreth to the fish's sight but the line : others fish down the river, and so suppose, the rod and line being long, the quantity of water takes away, or at least lesseneth the fish's sight. But the others affirm that rod and line, and perhaps yourself, are seen also.

"In this difference of opinions I shall only say, in small Brooks you may angle upwards, or else in great Rivers you must wade, as I have known some, who thereby got the *Sciatica*,¹ and I would not wish you to purchase pleasure at so dear a rate. Besides, casting up the river you cannot keep your line out of the water, which we noted for a fault before ; and they that use this way confess, that if in casting your fly the line fall into the water before it, the fly were better uncast, because it frights the fish : then certainly it must do it this way, whether the fly fall first or not, the line must first come to the fish, or fall on him, which undoubtedly will fright him. Therefore my opinion is that you angle down the River, for the other way you traverse twice so much, and beat not so much ground as downwards."

This quotation throws much light on Walton's text, yet Lang passed it over.

2. Walton is fishing from the bankside, and tells his pupil not to cumber himself with too long a line, as most do ; to have the wind on his back and the sun (if it shines) before him, if possible ; and then to fish downstream, while keeping as far from the water's edge as he conveniently can.

3. Rods in Walton's day were single-hand and very long, some 18 feet according to Cotton ; so a fly-fisher could walk down a riverside and drop a short length of his light horse-hair line till the fly rested on the current, which would bear it downstream towards the heads of trout.

4. The fly-fishing described by Walton is done to this day on Irish trout lakes, as Mr. Marston has pointed out.

5. Then, again, Hamilton says that "observation must decide for you as to whether you will fish up or down the stream. No rule can be laid down, as it so depends on a variety of circumstances—the wind, the light, the condition of the banks, the set of the stream ; but all anglers will agree that if the river can be fished upstream it is preferable, as, independent of having more power over your fish when hooked, you have the stream with

¹ Wading boots cannot have been waterproof, then. They are seen in one of Barlow's designs, etched by Hollar.

you, instead of against you, and thereby a better chance of landing your fish ; and also you have the great advantage of not disturbing your fishing water, as you bring your captive at once, or very soon, into water already fished over. . . .”¹

It is clear that Andrew Lang forgot for a moment his habit of research, and wrote in haste about *The Compleat Angler's* technical instruction. Hamilton is much fairer to Walton ; he had no wish to pick holes in a chatty and charming classic. Once or twice, he hints at a difference of opinion. Walton says, for instance :

“ And if he [the angler] hit to make his fly right, and have the luck to hit, also, where there is store of Trouts, a dark day, and a right wind, he will catch such store of them, as will encourage him to grow more and more in love with the art of fly-making.”

To this Hamilton answers :

“ A dark day and a right wind no doubt are every fly-fisher's wish when he goes a-fishing—but which is the right wind ?

‘ When the wind is south
It blows your bait into a fish's mouth.’

“ Others are loud in the praise of a westerly wind, but to quote from *The Compleat Angler* again, Walton hits the mark in the following passage : ‘ And yet, as Solomon observes, that he that considers the wind shall never sow ; so he that busies his head too much about them, if the weather be not made extreme cold by an east wind, shall be a little superstitious : for as it is observed by some, That there is no good horse of a bad colour ; so I have observed, that if it be a cloudy day, and not extreme cold, let the wind sit in what corner it will, and do its worst, I heed it not. . . .’ ”

Hamilton agrees with Walton in the main, but lays less emphasis on cold. Some writers believe with Jesse that it is a waste of time to fish for trout if the water is below fifty-five or sixty degrees ; “ but this is not at all to be depended upon,” says Hamilton ; and next as regards the wind, although a balmy, breezy, cloudy day, with wind from the south or west, will give a better chance for sport, yet anglers whose holidays begin and end on fixed dates are obliged to accept every day as it is. Also, experience tells Hamilton

¹ Hamilton's *Recollections*, p. 113. Hofland's views on the same subject are as follows :—“ Some persons recommend fishing up the stream, and throwing the fly before them ; others walk down the river, and cast the fly before them. For my own part (after much experience) whenever I can do so with convenience, I cast my fly a little above me, and across the stream drawing it gently towards me. . . .”



PIKE FISHING.



FLOAT FISHING.



FLY-FISHING.



MINNOW FISHING.

*From Etchings by SAMUEL HOWITT (1750-1822).
(See his ANGLER'S MANUAL, 1808).*

that many a good day's sport has come to him when the wind has been in the north or in the east. "In fact," he adds, "let the wind do its worst, I heed it not. I can remember having capital sport in some open water in Hertfordshire, years ago, with wind from the north-east; and snowing all day."¹

Hofland's views on these matters are given in his *Manual*, pp. 65, 66, 67. The winds most favourable to the angler, he says, are south, south-east, south-west, and north-west; except in March and April, when the north-west wind is generally too cold.

"A fresh breeze is favourable, especially for lake-fishing, mill dams, or the still deeps of rivers, as the ripple on the water, caused by the breeze, has the same effect as a rapid stream in preventing the sharp-sighted trout from discovering the deception of the artificial fly. In lake-fishing, you can hardly have too much wind, if you can manage your boat comfortably, and keep your fly on the water."

Hofland adds :

"Whilst I am writing this article, the snow is falling: yet I read in the *Times* newspaper of the day, April 18th, 1838, the following paragraph, headed 'Good News for Anglers. So very plentiful is fish in the river Wye, in the neighbourhood of Builth, that Stephen Pritchard, the fishing-tackle maker of Builth, caught, on Tuesday last, in the course of four hours, not less than 143 grayling, trout, and salmon-pink; and in five hours of the following day, 225 fish of the same description.' This shows how early the season commences in the Wye compared with the streams in the neighbourhood of London. . . ."

Then there is the question of a best time of day for trout fishing. Walton rises with the sun, seemingly, for he likes best to fish from 5 a.m. to 9 a.m. There are angling writers who give their sport a siesta in the middle of the day, crowding work upon it before breakfast and just when it will interfere with the modern sacred custom of late dinner. Other experts are so timid towards bright weather and serene water that they regard it as futile to fish except before 8 a.m. and after 6 p.m. But Hamilton agrees with Daniell, who, in his *Rural Sports*, gives a table of when and where to angle for different fish, and under *trout* he says all day, "and he is about right," says Hamilton. "You may fish all day, be it bright or dull, and have sport, too, provided you know how and where to throw your fly for a trout. . . ."

Further, he disagrees with the maxim that a bright fly is best for a dark

¹ Edward Hamilton's *Recollections*, p. 127.

day, a dark fly for a bright day. His experience has reversed this axiom invariably ; so he chooses the brightest fly in his book on a sunny day.¹ To take an example. One bright morning at Chiltern Bridge, at the end of July, when the sun is piping hot and the Kennet like glass, Hamilton is advised to wait till sundown. But he dons his waders, and goes into the middle of the river ; puts on a small Soldier Palmer ornamented with gold twist, and throws it over a big trout lying on the shallows above the bridge, where some other large fellows raise their big tails now and then above the water. At the third cast the chosen fish turns his head, and the angler his wrist. Ah ! All's well ! There's a good struggle, but soon the trout is landed—nearly two pounds, and a beauty.

Patiently in a broiling sun Hamilton defies a windless morning and luminous clear water. When luncheon time comes he has two brace of beautiful fish, all killed with the same Soldier Palmer. His friend, meantime, a fly-fisher, has done nothing, declaring it far too hot for good sport. In the afternoon they sketch ; then, about seven, they begin to fish with the Coachman Fly, and before half-past eight they have caught five brace apiece, not one under a pound and a half.

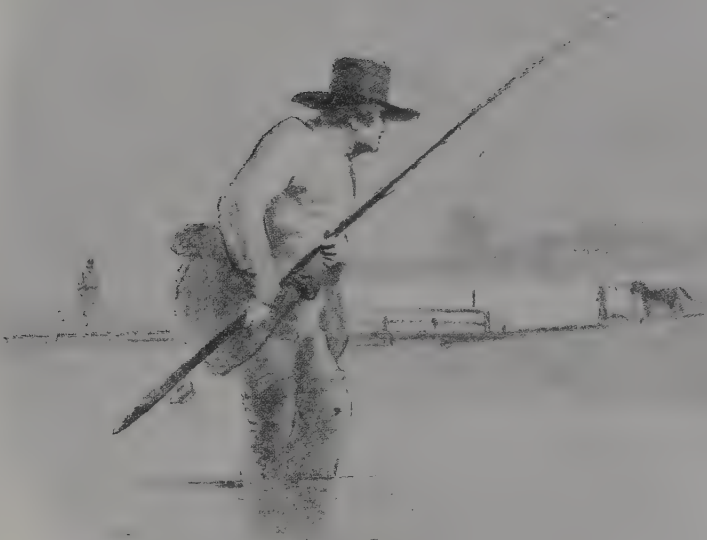
Next day they fish together up the Kennet at Ramsbury. The weather has changed ; it is dark and stormy, with much rain. Hamilton, testing the Waltonian maxim that a dark day needs a bright fly, tries a Sedge Fly with silver twist, and cannot get a rise ; so he changes it to one without any silver twist, and at once he rises a fish. His friend follows his example, and before two o'clock they have landed with this fly twenty brace of fine fish, not one under a pound, some of them between two and three pounds each, and three are over three pounds. All but the very large ones are returned to the water.²

III

Artist-anglers are often impressed by the intelligence of trout, like Sir Charles Holmes in his illuminating little book *The Tarn and the Lake*, published in 1913. To Sir Charles "the trout is no single, common, identical, definite, determined and measurable fish, but rather ten thousand tantalizing, distinct and different devils." If so, a fly-fisher eager for good

¹ Note that Colonel Venables gave the same advice in Walton's day (p. 32 of his book) :—" If the day be clear, then a light-coloured fly, with slender body and wings. In dark weather as well as dark waters your fly must be dark."

² Hamilton's *Recollections*, pp. 121-123.



SIR FRANCIS CHANTREY, R.A., "BLOWING." *From a Pencil Drawing by* GEORGE JONES, R.A. (1786-1689). *Published in Sir Herbert Maxwell's "Chronicles of the Houghton Fishing Club, 1822-1908," See pages 170 and 173.*

sport should give to variations of trout a studious attention which statesmen generally decline to bestow on human incalculableness and the welfare of mankind. If you angle for votes you *may* educate your electorate and lose your seat when you try the same angling again ; but if you fish for trout in a place where they have been left undisturbed, and where they have grown unsuspecting, you will pass rapidly through great catches into barren days, unless the fish are very hungry, and therefore reckless ; “ their native wits will expand to challenge yours,” as Sir Charles Holmes says after testing the native wits of inexperienced trout.

“ In virtue of this instinctive response to outward conditions the trout becomes to the angler no unworthy antagonist. He is a being of like intelligence and appetites, so that the opponents meet on equal terms. The successful angler is the man who most fully recognizes this parity, and can act upon it.”

Sir Charles draws a close analogy between certain communities of fish and certain societies of men, in order to show that angling and art are more intimately associated, from a standpoint of history, than students of both have noted. He shows that breeds of fish and breeds of men need for their proper development enough danger to exercise their self-protective qualities, and enough food and safety to satisfy their physical needs. The great periods of art, he goes on to remind us, were not periods of fat and sleek peace, but periods of great stress and strain, with acute rivalries in trade and commerce, frequent wars, and a general insecurity of human life, owing to the prevalence of many diseases over which the medical customs of the times had scarcely any control at all. Similarly, when men think of improving fish and fishing, they must not suppose that the predatory pike is nothing more than the tyrant of fresh waters, a freshwater shark, that does more harm than good in a loch or lake. The Fishery Conservators have bungled many times, disturbing Nature's balance under water by striving to exterminate pike, and by failing to give enough careful study to the see-saw conditions that are active in a community of fishes.

Edward Hamilton, for instance, was alarmed by reckless weed-and-reed cutting.

“ In my opinion,” he wrote, “ weed cutting is carried much too far. It encourages poaching and it impoverishes fish. Trout are much finer and fatter in rivers where the reeds are cut with judgment. It is terrible to see the way in which the weeds are cut in some rivers, particularly in the Hampshire streams. Weeds should be cut in the same way as heather is burnt

on the moors, with the utmost circumspection, so as to benefit and improve the sport—every here and there left in clumps, one year in one locality, the next year in another, and so on. No real sportsman will object to such a proceeding, for, although it makes it more difficult to kill a big fish, yet it preserves the trout; they have their natural hiding-places and natural food, which is bred on and in the weeds.”¹

Sir Charles Holmes writes of a reedy lake from which pike were banished, with the result that perch became innumerable and very small, not worth catching. As for the trout, they were hustled in the shallows by swarms of diminutive, prickly perch, so they retired to the deeps; then fly-fishing was over for the year. One huge pike had escaped the netting warfare of man, and he lived also in the deeps, devouring the trout.

Hamilton is less enthusiastic than Sir Charles Holmes towards the intelligence of trout.²

“In some of the well-fished rivers,” he says, in his *Recollections of Fly-Fishing*, “the big trout become very wary, and I have known twenty minutes spent over a feeding fish before he would take the fly; and then if the fly is of the right colour he will all of a sudden take it. This is particularly the case in the Hampshire rivers which are so much fished. Some years ago I had many a good day on these rivers, but then there were fewer fishmen, and the trout were more abundant, and perhaps not so highly educated, although it required the three rules [*a quick eye, a patient mind, and a gentle hand*] to be implicitly followed if you wished to fill your basket.”

Hamilton says also that when trout are on the feed and have risen at and not taken your fly, they will seldom come again (a grayling will, but a trout as a rule not); he has to all appearances made up his mind that the lure is a wrong one. “But at the right fly he certainly will come twice, and that even after he has been hooked.” Still, the sense and sensibility of trout, like the sensibility and sense of mankind, are not to be judged by a victory of too-eager hope—or too-eager hunger—over experience. How often do political voters rise at the same deceptive bait diligently cast at them by the same party anglers? Very often it is easier to befool mankind than to mislead the instincts of inferior creatures; for growing intelligence loves experiment, and is never willing to think that any rule or maxim has no exceptions.

¹ Hamilton's *Recollections*, pp. 132–133.

² His most enthusiastic views on the intelligence of fish are found in his book, *The Riverside Naturalist* (1890), a charming work (pp. 179–180). I do not quote them.



AN ANGLING NOOK, perhaps on Colne Brook, West Drayton.
*From an Oil Painting by the little-known painter, WILLIAM JONES, who
worked during the early years of Queen Victoria's life. The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.*

IV

It is time, however, to say something more about Thomas Christopher Hofland, who lived from 1777-1843. Born at Worksop in Nottinghamshire, he was the son of an able man who made machinery for cotton mills. As a landscape painter he was mainly self-taught, studying for a few months only under Rathbone. Between 1799 and 1806 he set up his home at Kew, where he was aided by George III, who set him to draw some plants in the King's collection. Hofland was accepted by the Royal Academy, was chosen to be a foundation member of the Royal British Artists, and he exhibited often at the Royal Institution. Like Cotman, Dewint, and David Cox, he gave lessons. In order to get pupils and new sketching, he travelled much, taking his fishing tackle with him; and practised as a teacher at Derby, Doncaster, Knaresborough, Richmond, Twickenham, and elsewhere. His sketching holidays were angling holidays also, and his book shows that he was alert and wideawake wherever he went.

In his *Angler's Manual* there are fourteen steel plates by W. R. Smith after Hofland's pictures, and no fewer than thirty-nine woodcuts by Landells, Vasey, Thompson, Burrows, Byfield, Wright, and Folkard. One cut is from a drawing by Sir Francis Chantrey, R.A., the sculptor-angler, to whom the book is dedicated; one after a still-life of carp and tench painted by G. Hilditch; but Hofland himself made most of the drawings—thirty in all. His book, then, is an important one in the history of artist-anglers. The copy on my desk belongs to Mr. Reynolds Stephens, the distinguished sculptor, and a fly-fisher of long experience.

From first to last Hofland's aim is to be helpful to those who do not know and who wish to learn. He has been a keen angler for thirty years, and has noticed a gap in the many books on his sport, no writer having studied numerous trout streams in the northern counties, or done justice to the lake scenery of Westmorland, Cumberland, and the Scottish Highlands. As for southern fishing, he knows the Thames intimately, having visited every good angling resort from London to Reading; and many other waters also are known to him. He has seen enough of Great Britain to be as a guide to angling tourists eager to have a serviceable book for their holidays of sport. In other words, Hofland's *Manual*, first published in 1839, may be called the literary Baedeker or Cook of the Pollard period of my subject.

This artist-angler quotes rarely from the angling poets, unlike Hamilton, but he knows what they have written. "Few poets and painters have been

foxhunters," he says, "but many have been anglers"; and his attitude towards dangerous field sports is like that of Dame Bernes. Why should he cripple his painting hand and arm in a fall out hunting?

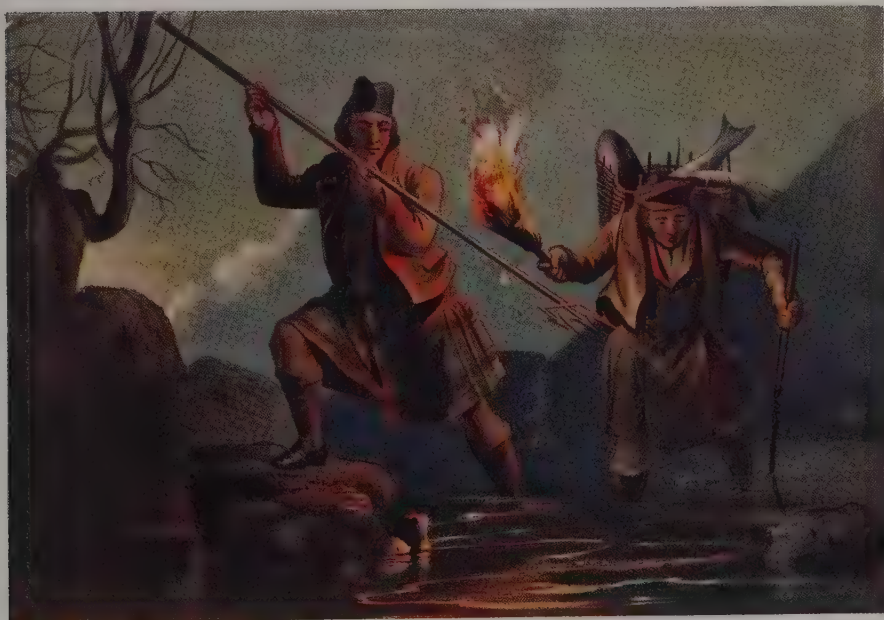
Instruction being his aim, he keeps at close quarters with it, and tries even to persuade young anglers to make their own flies; but the angler's prayer passion is not forgotten. On p. 33 he starts to relate a story which begins with a Scottish Highlander's rod, 18 feet long and an immense wooden pirl, on which 80 yards of strong line are wound. With his second throw the Highlander strikes a fish, which runs out his line with such furious activity that the poor panting fisherman has to follow as best he may, over rocks and stones, and often through the water also. There's no chance of turning this huge athletic fish till they reach a broad and deep pool, more than a mile downstream. At this haven the salmon defeats the spent angler, plunging for a while, and then "sounding" to the bottom, where he lies immovable, in spite of the strong line and the Highlander's rising temper. Then, suddenly, the salmon starts upstream again, a fish in full spate, drawing the sportsman after him. At last the big fellow takes to the bottom again, and refuses to budge. Night falls, its darkness closing around a very tired but resolute angler who sits between two rocks, with his rod fixed securely, and his pirl placed in a position that will enable it to give out the line in case of need. The Highlander puts a piece of the line between his teeth, then falls asleep. At daybreak, he remembers, certain fishermen, as usual, will arrive with nets. They arrive at three in the morning, and the angler awakes. Nothing has happened to his line; so the royal salmon is at the bottom sulking. But not for long now. Nets get him, and he weighs seventy-four pounds!

Hofland adds that the truth of this adventure is vouched by several respectable Highlanders at the inn of Port Sonachan. After whisky, or before? In any case, Hofland remembers that a fishmonger in Bond Street named Grove has displayed a salmon weighing eighty-three pounds. And here is another salmon story collected by Hofland:

"It is said that one of the wonders which the Frazers of Lovat . . . used to show their guests, was a voluntarily cooked salmon at the Falls of Kilmorac. For this purpose a kettle [surely it must have been a cauldron] was placed upon the flat rock on the south side of the fall, close by the edge of the water, and kept full and boiling. There is a considerable extent of the rock where tents were erected, and the whole was under a canopy of overhanging trees. There the company are said to have waited till a salmon fell into the kettle, and was boiled in their presence; a mode of entertain-



ANGLERS OF 1611. *Engraved by* THOMAS ROW-
LANDSON *after* HENRY BUNBURY (1760 - 1811).



SCOTTISH SALMON-SPEARING, or Burning the Water.
*Artist unknown. From a scarce Lithograph, partly hand-painted,
belonging to Dr. James Ritchie, of the Royal Scottish Museum.*



TAKING A FLY. *Artist unnamed.* **EDWARD BARNARD**, of the Houghton Fishing Club, may be suggested. He died on 13th December, 1861, in his 76th year. Reproduced from an Aquatint lent by J. Rimell.



TROUT FISHING IN LOCH AWE. *From an Engraving by T. A. PRIOR after a Picture by T. C. HOFLAND (1777-1843).*

ment I confess myself incapable of coveting, being too much of a sportsman, and too little of an epicure, to desire conquest so unworthy, and cooking so unnatural."

If the reader will turn to Captain Franck's *Northern Memoirs*, pp. 105-151, of Sir Walter Scott's edition, he will find that the boiling-pot device for catching salmon was practised in Scotland during the seventeenth century.

Hofland's favourite sport is trout-fishing, but he studies salmon-fishing, and observes "that large gaudy flies are not so much in use as they were formerly, particularly in Wales and Scotland." In Ireland, too, at Killarney, in August 1836, his angling guide, Michael Doherty, shows him some salmon-flies which are small, and dull in colour, rather than gaudy; the guide's favourites seeming to have dark turkey, or grouse feather wings, and brown olive bodies, ribbed with narrow gold twist.¹

Briefly, when students of art wish to learn from artists what British fishing was like during the Howitt-Alken-and-Pollard times, Hofland's *Manual* should be their principal book; then Edward Barnard's *Angling Memories and Maxims*, illustrated by himself; next the few pages of notes on fishing in Henry Alken's *British Sports*, the folio and the quarto; finally, Samuel Howitt's *The Angler's Manual, or Concise Lessons of Experience*, embellished with a dozen plates designed and etched by Howitt himself. This book was published in 1808, at Liverpool, by G. F. Harris. There is no need in this chapter to review Howitt, but I reproduce four of his etchings, and four plates also from Alken's *British Sports*. As for Hofland's angling in art, it is represented in a half-page of colour, set side by side, by way of contrast, with a scene of active angling by another artist.²

Hofland is attracted by what he calls the sublime in landscape. Some prints in his book show the influence of Turner, a perilous great master for any minor painter to accept as a teacher; but Hofland's admiring courage is far and away better than the attitude of Hearne and Edridge, who, in their

¹ Hofland's *Manual*, p. 40. For all that, he sees very gaudy flies at Limerick, and in Scotland also (p. 45); "but in Wales and in England, smaller and duller-coloured flies are more successful."

² Some other middle-period books: James Thorne's *Rambles by Rivers* (1844), T. F. Salter's *The Troller's Guide* (1820), the younger Stephen Oliver's *Scenes and Recollections of Fly-Fishing* (1834), Charles Bowker's *The Art of Angling* (reprint, 1839), Thomas Tod Stoddart's *Art of Angling as Practised in Scotland* (1835), Theophilus South's (Edward Chitty's) *The Fly-Fisher's Text-Book* (1845), James Rennie's *Alphabet of Scientific Angling* (1836), Alexander Mackintosh's *The Driffield Angler* (1806), O'Gorman's *The Practice of Angling, particularly as regards Ireland* (1845), the Rev. Henry Newland's *The Erne: Its Legends and its Fly-Fishing* (1851), George P. R. Pulman's *The Book of the Axe* (1854), William Andrew Mitchell's *On the Pleasure and Utility of Angling* (1824), Thomas Moule's *The Heraldry of Fish* (1842), and William Scrope's *Days and Nights of Salmon Fishing*, with pretty-pretty plates in colour after Charles Landseer, and others (1843).

talks with Farington, show no appreciation of Turner's marvellous gifts, and moan over the alleged excessive prices that their magical superior receives from the Earl of Essex.

Hofland represents Dove Dale, Derbyshire, Loch Awe, and Hampton in Middlesex, a pleasing composition; Richmond Bridge on the Thames, the Horse and Groom Inn at Lea Bridge, with a fly-fisher angling from a boat; Ullswater, Bolton Abbey and its River, Whitewell in Yorkshire, a Turneresque design, not ill-managed; a Welsh landscape, Snowdon from the Inn at Capel Curig, and an Irish scene, the Dargle in County Wicklow.

In these prints the angling benefits the design, but is a minor agent in Hofland's aims as a landscape painter. This applies also, though not so strikingly, to Howitt's etchings and water-colours; while Henry Alken's original fishing prints, in the quarto edition of his *British Sports*, show anglers prominently. In the folio edition there are three different fishing prints, aquatinted by J. Clark after Henry Alken; but Henry is not at his best when his wonderful versatility as a sporting journalist works with a rod and line. General Cowie, who knows perhaps more about Alken's work than anyone else, agrees with me in this verdict. Still, Henry Alken's original drawings of angling subjects for his *British Sports* are greatly superior to the prints. Major Oswald Magniac has two in his choice collection of Alken drawings, and both are libelled by the aquatints.

V

Then there is Edward Barnard, a foundation member (*i.e.* in 1822) of the Houghton Fishing Club, who in 1833 wrote and illustrated his *Angling Memories and Maxims*. During his life—he died in 1861 at the age of 76—he did not find a publisher for his manuscript; but, happily, Sir Herbert Maxwell has added Barnard's chapters to a delightful book, *The Chronicles of the Houghton Fishing Club* (London, 1908). It has been said that Barnard's humour, in prose and in sketching, is overdone; that he writes too much for the transitory amusement of a club in its early days; and that his remarks on natural history have been displaced by later research. But Edward Barnard remains, not only a man of versatile gifts, but a jolly companion in the riverside sportsmanship of his changing times, when J. M. W. Turner drew in pencil a fishing caricature for the Houghtonians; when Edwin Landseer made two good caricatures of Sir Francis Chantrey, R.A. when Chantrey with a delicate and charming touch drew portraits in profile of the Club's members; and when some other famous Academicians—



RIVERSIDE LANDSCAPE, with an Angler. *From an Oil Painting*
by SAMUEL ALKEN (c. 1750-c. 1825). *The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.*

George Jones, F. R. Lee, and Sir Francis Grant—helped to adorn the Club's annals. These artists and sportsmen lived through a gradual transition from coaching days into a type of society dependent on steam and machinery. Barnard was a member, and usually a spirit of joy, for thirty-nine years. We look back from his death in 1861 (when the Northern and Southern States of America began their long war) to the year 1822 (when Lord Londonderry, better known as Lord Castlereagh, died by his own hand, on August 12th).

As we look back, year by year, we see how three great and formidable antitheses passed through their stages of growth; how a society with a small population, dependent mainly on agriculture, and on sailing ships of many varieties, became more and more mechanical, industrial, and busy with children: how, in the meantime, and in all parts of the world, political materials were collected for an inevitable sequence of great wars: and how also our own country grew more and more speculative and over-confident, and also more sensitive and humane. When you read the Houghton's Chronicles, keep an outline of all these things conspicuously before your minds. For instance, Benjamin Disraeli's four great novels on the Condition of the People—*Lothair* (1870), *Tancred* (1847), *Sybil* (1845), and *Coningsby* (1844)—give many a thousand aspects of those generative changes in society as a whole which were active around the temper of British sportsmanship. In *Sybil* we are shown how political power and privilege were misemployed with unrelenting cruelty; and when we turn from Disraeli's true pictures to the Houghton's record for 1845, we find only two entries, and in the second, dated December 26th, Henry Warburton writes to one of the foundation members, the famous Canon Beadon, about a gift of pike, and says: ¹

"Do you know how to dress it? Roast or bake it of course; but the pudding—what of that? The ancients had a celebrated dish called the Trojan Horse. The horse was personated by a pig, and the Greeks in the inside by small poultry and delicacies of every imaginable kind, animal and vegetable. At the first gash of the carver, out rushed the thrushes and larks and truffles, etc. Your Trojan Horse is the jack, and the Greeks are to be personated by some oysters and some full brown mushrooms chopped small,

¹ Canon Beadon lived to be 101 and 6 months, dying on June 10th, 1879. His last attendance at Mayfly with the Houghton was in 1864; he retired from the Club only three years before his death. At the age of 91, May 26th, 1868, he wrote in a letter to Martin T. Smith: "Yesterday I caught a brace of trout—one 2 lb. 8 oz., and thank God, as my health is good, I shall try to catch more; but, of course, I cannot see, as well as formerly, the fly on the water."

and perhaps a little bacon, together with the other ordinary ingredients of a pudding. . . .”

When this was written the Houghton was twenty-three years old, and the spring-time gaiety which it had brought into angling remained unchanged. Much earlier, in 1822, our country had begun to go away from ferocious legal punishments, which as late as 1808 had fixed the penalty of death on 200 offences, such as cutting down a tree, or personating a Greenwich pensioner. In such times Sporting Clubs were necessary to good fellowship; and I think of the Houghton's earlier periods as years of a genial, well-to-do, and almost boyish Bohemianism, whose devotees were fond of showing that Latin and laughter, and Greek and glad-heartedness, were equally easy to their fun.

Another quotation from the Chronicles will show the gaiety. The date is June 3rd, 1831, and the famous sculptor Chantrey, then fifty, and within ten years of his death, is the object of mirth:

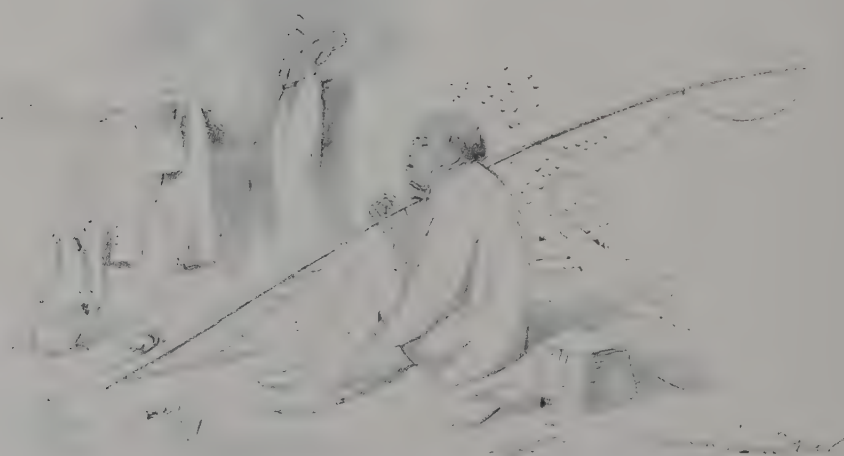
“ . . . A stoutish gentleman was observed at the angle of the carrier below Sloane's Sluice busily engaged for an hour and a half, after an unusual bustle between him and his attendant. The first surmise of the distant observer was that he had caught a Monster. He was, however, subsequently seen washing and drying some of his undergarments. At last he proceeded slowly towards the Tent, covered with his waterproof cloak; and, on his arrival, stated that he had tumbled in, and was obliged to dry his clothes. The party were bound to believe that this was the *only accident* that had happened. At all events he dined this day without certain *inexpressible conveniences* which custom sanctions and decency enjoins.”

“ Chantrey, thy genius bids the sculptured bust
Renew the form that moulders in the dust;
What rival artist e'er can hope from you
To snatch the laurel to proportion due?
You've justly earned the fame your name enriches,
Who, true to Nature, dine without your breeches.”

Edwin Landseer must have been present, for he caricatured at once two episodes in this small adventure. “ He had captured a Monster ” is the title of one pencil drawing, and Chantrey, “ a stoutish gentleman,” is alarmed into slimness, and his bald head grows instantaneous hair that stands on end. The sculptor's attendant is a small boy, who hangs on to Chantrey's coat behind. In the other sketch Chantrey in his short shirt is seated on the bankside, with his rod over his right shoulder, his bare legs raised, a swarm of flies around his bald head, while his breeches are drying on a fence, and attracting a small terrier.



"The first surmise was that he had captured a monster." *Humorous Drawing of Sir Francis Chantrey, R.A., by SIR EDWIN LANDSEER, R.A. (1802-1873).*



"Sir Francis Chantrey was obliged to dry his clothes." *Humorous Sketch by EDWIN LANDSEER, R.A. See pp. 172, 173. Drawn for The Houghton Fishing Club, 1822.*

It was in 1831—the year of this episode—that Edwin Landseer became a Royal Academician, in his twenty-ninth year ; so Chantrey must have been a jolly old boy at both ends of his career, willing to be laughed at by his juniors. Even as a visitor to the Club, in 1822, he was caricatured as a fly-fisher by another visitor, George Jones, R.A., one of Turner's intimate friends, like Chantrey.¹ From these humorous drawings we learn also that it was the Houghtonians who broke away from the uneasy fishing costumes of the eighteen-twenties and thirties, when tall hats were used in sports, and other sartorial handicaps. Edward Barnard wrote of a fishing party at Stockbridge, and of its clothes :

“ Breakfast did not take long, and the party prepared to get ready for the start. I found upon assembling again, however, that the appearance of most was totally changed by the varieties of dress and fanciful caparison with which each was now clothed ; there did not appear to be any particular rule by which they were guided ; all had their fancies, and each thought his the best. One man wore a very large wide-flapped hat, that hung down over his shoulders ; another a small common dog's hair hat, value 3s. 6d., bought at the opposite shop, that just fitted his head, and the brim turned up all round like an old overgrown mushroom. Their clothes were variously fashioned, but all of dark colours. I requested to be informed of the rules of the Club, and I was told that there were only two—one that no fish was to be killed under a pound—the other, grounded upon the liberal principles of Free Trade, that no member was to fish before the 1st of January nor after the 31st of December in any year, Leap Year not excepted. . . .”²

In his drawings Edward Barnard is always comic, and pretty often too hilarious ; he is not an inventor of many good practical jokes, like Charles Lever. After studying his work in Sir Herbert Maxwell's *Chronicles of the Houghton Fishing Club*, I believe that Barnard is to be regarded as the designer of that series of coloured prints in which the funny woes of inexpert angling are ridiculed, under such titles as “ A Sharp Bite,” “ Smiling Showers, or Ducks of Delight,” “ Digging for Bait ” (and stirring up a wasp's nest), “ Patience in a Punt,” and “ Taking a Fly,” which I reproduce here in colour.

¹ In a letter from Rome, dated October 13th, 1828, and addressed to Jones, Turner said : “ Tell that fat fellow Chantrey that I did think of him ; *then* (but not the first or the last time) of the thousands he had made out of those marble crags, which only afforded me a sour bottle of wine and a sketch ; but he deserves everything that is good, though he did give me a fit of the spleen at Carrara. . . .” After Chantrey's death Turner was inconsolable. “ I well remember,” said George Jones, “ the morning after Chantrey's death (in 1841), that he [Turner] came to the house of our deceased friend ; he asked for me, and I went to him. He wrung my hand, tears streaming from his eyes, and rushed from the house without uttering a word. . . .”

² *Chronicles of the Houghton Fishing Club*, pp. 189-190.

Sir Herbert Maxwell, in a note on the artists who enriched the chronicle of sport for the Houghtonians, regrets that this embellishment has fallen into disuse.

“ It cannot be that the graphic faculty has failed among fishermen,” he writes, “ nor has the gentle craft lost favour with artists ! No ; the fault is with the photographers ; the ruthless fidelity of the Kodak, the ignoble facility of the snapshot, have sterilised the sketch-book and paralysed the palette in this age when everybody has just caught, is busy catching, or is about to catch, a train. . . .”

Photography, in so far as illustrated journalism is concerned, has been bad for sport in art ; but even to-day we have our own Henry Alken, Lionel Edwards, a young artist of swift and sure genius. There is no need for Kodaks and snapshots to be harmful if anglers encourage artists ; but questions of change in the moods of a nation are different ; and we must remember that the Houghton Club, after the spring and summer of its high spirits, was inevitably subject, as its younger members aged, not only to the increasing competition of daily life, but also to that growth of sadness and anxiety which turned popular novelists into social reformers, and caused Carlyle to lose all hope in the ultimate destiny of man upon earth. Dickens became sadder and sadder ; Thackeray’s attitude towards the world changed into one of profound *morne* ; Charles Reade, like Charles Kingsley, wanted his genius as a story-teller to be like a reforming House of Commons ; and while the leading authors were busy with doubts, disputes, distractions, fears, and fads, successful painters, complying with the business prosperity of the age, were building for themselves large museum houses. All this differed vastly from that gay-heartedness which enabled Chantrey to sit for caricatures, and which Charles Keene and John Leech inherited from Edward Barnard, Robert Seymour, Sir Robert Frankland, and other graphic believers in fishing humour, like John Doyle (“ H. B.”), Rowlandson, Woodward, and Bunbury.

Gaiety, very often accompanied by excessive drinking, increased throughout the eighteenth century, forming at last a graphic art of its own, as in Gillray, Bunbury, Rowlandson, while killing a man of genius here and there, as in the case of Morland. It may be regarded as a mixed reaction, partly against Puritan rigour, and partly against that warfare between Crown and Country, which had intensified the seventeenth-century Puritanism. In the next chapter some notable pictures of the eighteenth century will be studied ; and then we shall move on into the times of Bunyan, Milton, Walton, Barlow, and of other antithetical contrasts.



A SNUG ANGLING PARTY. By THOMAS ROWLANDSON. From a print lent by W. T. Spencer. The original Water-Colour is in the Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.



ONE OF THE LESSER JOYS OF ANGLING. From an Aquatint by CHARLES TURNER, after SIR ROBERT FRANKLAND, Bart., who designed Sporting Prints at the beginning of the XIX. Century.



THE ANGLER. *From an Oil Painting by*
GEORGE MORLAND. *Coats Collection.*



A PARTY ANGLING. *From a Coloured Mezzotint*
by G. KEATING, 1789, *after* GEORGE MORLAND
(1763-1804). *See p. 178. Collection of Harry Keenil, Esq.*

CHAPTER VIII

FROM MORLAND TO THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

I

AT the close of Chapter VI we were troubled by incomplete signatures. Even worse troubles arise when painters of the same period and school leave their pictures unsigned, as though they were all unique, like the sun and moon. Vanity being the cause of their affectation of humility, they regard their work as beyond reach of imitators and forgers, unlike signatures. Many generations have had artists who have believed in this folly, though warned against it by frequent disputes caused by anonymous paintings.

The act of signing works of art should be made compulsory by the Copyright Law, as a guarantee of good faith ; and if pictures were signed not only on their painted surfaces, but also behind on their canvases or panels, the future history of art would benefit greatly. Signing and dating should be a routine of trade, because pictures are as cheques drawn upon the markets of art, present and future.

A great many sporting pictures are unsigned, and we have to consider in this chapter some important examples. Being important, they have set controversy in movement, and rival attributions, when circulated by many critics, take us away from the merits of the work discussed, by inviting us all to play with them in a game of æstheticism, which may be called tennis-criticism. Generally, a picture is the net, and attributed names pass over it to and fro, lobbed by the half-hearted, and volleyed with increasing confidence by players who enjoy contention. The game is most amusing to the players when it is a double, a foursome, because experts do not work well as partners ; they hinder each other's play, and disagreement makes them prouder of their limited knowledge. Besides, even dull imaginations become alert when they are not hampered by documented facts. If common sense were more attractive than the game of tennis-criticism, controversial pictures would be given at once to the artist called Anon., or the Unknown, whose works belong to every period and every school. I love Anon., the final refuge

of defeated specialists ! A book should be written about his variety ; and when a good picture is given to Anon., its market value should be increased, not lowered, by the absence of an attributed name. Of course, this view is uncommercial, and therefore unpopular, particularly among British buyers and salesmen. Attributions remain very active, so that poor Anon. is robbed of too many things.

If you say that life needs comedy, and that comedy and attributed names go frequently together, I can help you to prove your point. For example, turn to Ralph Richardson's two volumes on George Morland, 1895, and on p. 63, vol. i., you will read in a footnote :

"Even the most respectable and experienced auctioneers are hoaxed. A painting which was sold a few years ago as a Morland, turned out, on being cleaned, to have on it the signature of Sir John Watson Gordon, P.R.S.A., R.A. A manufactory of 'Morlands' is said to exist in London, and its locality has been pointed out to the Author."

Cheered by this news, turn to p. 112 of the same volume, and read :

"In this Catalogue, the letters 'G. M.' before a picture mean that it was considered that it was painted by Morland ; whilst the letter 'M.' indicates that the picture was only attributed to Morland, and was sold as such."

This guidance from Richardson refers to auction catalogues, and neither "G. M." nor "M." can be looked upon as evidence. Morlands were forged even in Morland's lifetime, and Morland's brother-in-law, James Ward, who wished to be apprenticed to him, painted some things in Morland's manner for practice. Morland had several pupils, notably T. Hand—quite a good imitator at his best—and also the steady David Brown, who retired into Morland's art from house painting, and who bought many of his master's best productions, and sold them at a big profit.

Morland trifled so much with his genius, and became so tempting to copyists, that the responsibility of attribution should be left to buyers whenever his full name cannot be catalogued with certainty. Morland had a rapid brush even when he was tipsy, and a copyist could always say that he had for sale several Morlands a little the worse for gin or rum or shrub. There is no proof that T. Hand was a forger, but he copied his master, and fraudulent little dealers added to many of his small pictures the master's name or initials.

Even the very large number of good engravings after Morland aided imitators, supplying models at a moderate cost, and helping Morland & Co. to become particularly active after the poor genius was dead.



STREPHON AND PHYLLIS

*At length she grew weary and sat by the brook,
Where Strepson the Shepherd was baiting his hook.
Unnoticed he saw her, and heard her complain,
His heart was inflamed to allay her soft pain.*



THE ANGELIC ANGLER

*At once victorious, with your hands and eyes,
You make the fishes and the man your prize:
And while the pleasing slavery we court,
I fear you captivate us both for sport.*



Mr. and Mrs. BURKE OF CARSHALTON.
From an Oil Painting by JOHANN ZOFFANY,
R.A. (1733-1810) *The Collection of Mrs. Spencer-Perci et al.*

Several of his angling sketches and pictures were turned into very popular prints ; indeed, the earliest print in his long series was " The Angler's Repast," mezzotinted by his brother-in-law, William Ward, and published by J. R. Smith in 1780. This very pleasant composition was reissued as a coloured mezzotint in 1789, with a companion piece, " A Party Angling," published also by J. R. Smith, but in a coloured mezzotint by G. Keating. Both are familiar to everybody, they have been reproduced in so many books and magazines ; while the charming coloured mezzotint of five " Children Fishing " is not so well known, though it marks one of the happiest moods in Morland's early work. There is also a " G. M." picture catalogued as " A Boy and Girl Fishing " ; it was at Christie's in March 1891, when it fetched £101 17s.

With one exception—" Two Boys Fishing," an etching of 1801—angling prints after Morland belong to the seventeen hundred and eighties. Sea fishing came afterwards. Morland's coast fishermen are generally good, though some of them look too much like smugglers. It is not known whether Morland was himself a Waltonian, but he certainly put the sport into phases of art manlier than those that the Academicians Bigg and Hamilton produced now and then. Indeed, it was in rivalry with these Academicians that he began to paint pictures for the leading engravers, William Ward, Philip Dawe, J. Dean, G. Keating, and J. R. Smith.

J. R. Smith was a very astute supporter of Morland, engraving in all thirty-eight subjects, and publishing no fewer than sixty-seven. He offered twelve guineas for the first Morland that he wished to buy, " Children Playing at Blind Man's Buff." Morland expected to receive less, and the price caused him to say to shoemaker Brooks, his foul companion, " We'll drink twelve glasses of gin each when the money is paid ! " And the glasses were tipped to the last drop.

Instead of marketing his own pictures, he sold many of them at seven guineas apiece to one of his worst companions, Irwin, who took them at once to J. R. Smith, or some other patron, and received fifteen guineas.¹ For all that, he regarded his life as a merry one, and romped into practical jokes like a schoolboy. One of his friends, for instance, was a ventriloquist :

" He and Morland went together to the great fish-market at Billingsgate, and the artist, in order to cheapen a salmon, declared it was not fresh. The fishwoman loudly resented this, whereupon Morland asked her whether she would credit his assertion if she heard the fish itself declare it. ' By J—s,' she replied, ' you are a fool to say the salmon can speak.' However, Morland

¹ See George Dawe's *Life of Morland*, 1807, p. 74.

begged her to hold the fish to her ear, which she did, laughing, and called to a neighbour to come and hear a salmon talk. Their surprise may be imagined when they heard the fish distinctly address the woman in the following words: 'You know I stink, you lying ——!' The woman became terrified, a crowd collected, and Morland and his friend were glad to beat a retreat, as fast as possible, to a neighbouring public house. . . ."¹

There was a morose old fisherman whom Morland hated, and who set night-lines with great care. One evening Morland visited the lines with a friend, tied old wigs, shoes, and mopheads to the hooks, and then lay in wait, saying to the friend:

"The old bugaboes won't be able to say now, with some others of his profession, that he has toiled all the night and has taken nothing."

In the Isle of Wight, when hiding from his creditors, 1799, Morland's favourite companions were fishermen and smugglers, who got from him in exchange for good subjects as much tipple as they could drink. "The Fisherman's Hut," and the familiar picture of "Selling Fish," are of earlier date than the Isle of Wight period, which is represented by four good prints, as follows:—

1800. "The Fisherman's Dog," a mezzotint by S. W. Reynolds, who in 1805 engraved a finer mezzotint after Morland, "Fishermen Going Out," which J. R. Smith published.

1800. "Fishermen," a coast scene, with boats and dogs, very well mezzotinted by John Young.

1806. "Fishermen on Shore," toasting a fishergirl as she passes, a mezzotint by W. Hilton, published by J. R. Smith.

Several prints after Morland, associated with angling, are interesting because they give the character of his chalk sketches, showing plainly in their free and loose touch a quality of line akin to that which is given with a brush. The best of these prints was published in 1800 by John P. Thompson. It has two anglers in it, also a watermill with its wheel, a punt in the foreground, and across the river a fine tree that seems to grow powerfully from its wide-spreading roots. This good sketch belongs to the same mood as a notable Morland in the Coats Collection, showing a besmoked angler patiently fishing in a woodland pool; a picture full of silence, which I am able to reproduce from a small photograph. Below it is a half-page block of "A Party Angling," with Morland himself stretching forward with a net to land

¹ See *Richardson* (vol. i., p. 65), who takes the story from the earliest biographers.



CHILDREN FISHING. Engraved by P. DAWE (1788) after
an Oil Painting by GEORGE MORLAND (1763-1804).
Reproduced from a Proof Mezzotint lent by Mr. Frank T. Sabin.

a fish. These two pictures, and the five little children fishing, come to us from the tender chivalry that Morland's waywardness never betrayed into pungent caricature, or into cheap sentimentality.

Among the aquatints and etchings after Morland by Thomas Williamson, there is one of 1805, "A Summer's Evening," with an angler and two on-lookers, a man and a girl. A soft ground etching by a hand unknown, a small print of an angler under a tree, shows Morland in another quiet mood; and from pictures catalogued in the "G. M." series I choose three.

1. "A River Scene," with angler, and peasants on a road, an oval, sold at Christie's on June 27th, 1891, for 100 guineas.

2. "Landscape," with fishermen, a boat and a dog, sold on March 29th, 1890, for £61 19s.; and a

3. "Mountainous Landscape," with anglers, which at the same sale fetched £33 12s.

II

A friend of mine, dreaming over the life of Morland, says in a letter: "I can't help thinking that one art patron of those days, Colonel Thornton, Mæcenas of all-round sport, and a masterful man, whom painters liked, would have saved Morland from his tippling habits. They never met, somehow, and Morland was never taken up by a strong patron."

But Morland refused to be "taken up" by wealthy men, believing that they interfered with his freedom as a painter. He preferred a chorus of tipsy admirers who praised him all day long; and as regards Thomas Thornton, another wayward genius, born in 1757, let me try to sketch his real character. Thornton appears in a picture which we have to study here, and he is not yet known as he should be to students of sporting art. Like Morland, he was an example of human quicksilver. His influence in the life of a downgoing man of genius would have been too impatient, and also too luxurious. His banquets after a day of prolific sport were famed for their wines, and the Colonel himself, a powerful athlete, was not by any means a light drinker. Besides, a temperament like Morland's has never been saved from itself. Thornton's waywardness was not womanish, like Morland's, but it ruled over his life; and the Colonel fared royally through prodigal sportsmanship towards the break-up of his estates, always a very original figure, but never one to be much admired.

Thanks to the kindness of Mrs. Stroyan, I am able to reproduce a very

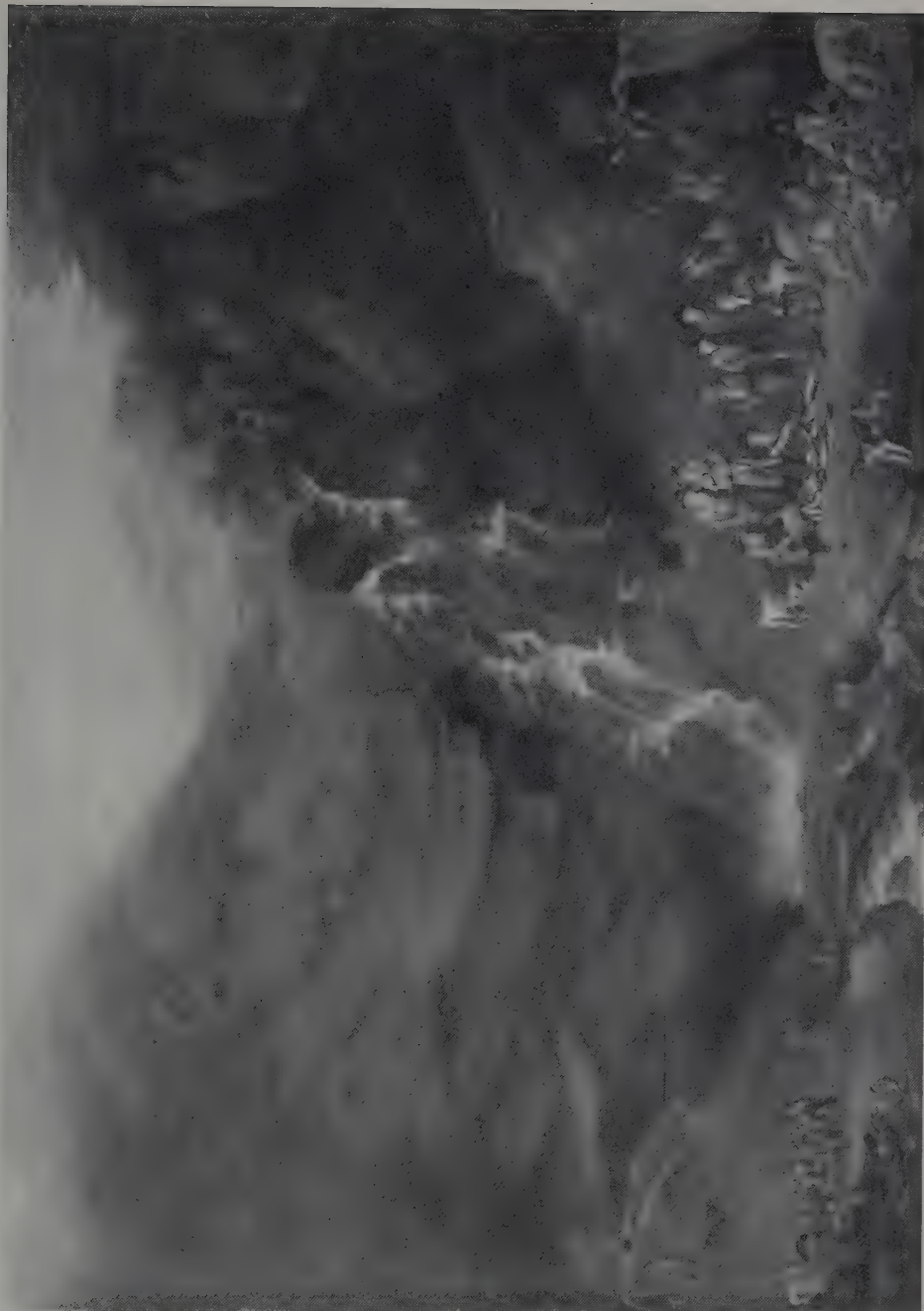
large picture that illustrates that kingly sporting tour through the Highlands of Scotland that Thornton made in 1786, after exploring much of the ground about a year earlier. A book was written by him on the tour, a book published in 1804 ; it was reviewed by Sir Walter Scott, who found it rather tedious.¹ After chartering a sloop called the *Falcon*, Thornton made a start, and partly by sea, partly by land, visited the northern and western Highlands, dividing his time between hunting, shooting, angling, and hawking. George Garrard, pupil of Sawrey Gilpin, afterwards an A.R.A., was Thornton's special artist ; and it seems to have been from sketches made by Garrard that Gilpin and Philip Reinagle painted a very remarkable picture, "The Display at the Return to Dulnon Camp," which passed from the late Sir Walter Gilbey to his daughter, Mrs. Stroyan.

Is there a better picture of eighteenth-century sport ? It has hawking enough to remind us that Colonel Thornton, at great expense, revived falconry in England ; and it has portraits of anglers, and also of good shots, surrounded by abundant still-life. The picture needs a key, but Thornton himself is the seated figure without a hat. As a whole, the portrait-painting is confident and manly. According to a funny attribution found in print, the landscape was painted by George Barret, R.A., who died in 1784, about two years before the sporting tour was undertaken ! If a third artist was chosen to work with Gilpin and Reinagle, in all fairness it should have been George Garrard, who served Thornton loyally in Scotland. The landscape certainly suggests a third painter. It is handled smoothly, unlike other landscapes in joint pictures by Reinagle and Gilpin. There is one dating from 1796, in which Colonel Thornton shoots roebuck in the forest of Glenmore, with the only twelve-barrelled rifle ever made. But this point is not the main one. The main point concerns Thornton's costume, which is so much like the suit he wears in the Dulnon painting, that both portraits appear to date from the same year, 1796, or thereabouts.

Why did he pose at such a time for his portrait ? England was bracing herself to encounter a revival of military triumph among the French, so that men of Thornton's courage were needed as officers, not as anglers and all-round sportsmen. Did our gallant Colonel fight ? His biographers tell us, not that he did well in the war, but that he longed to be a Frenchman, unlike Howe and Nelson !

Somehow, whenever the militancy of France has found a go-ahead leader, an uncommon type of English mind has become more French

¹ *Edinburgh Review*, January 1805.



THE DISPLAY AT THE RETURN TO DULNON CAMP.
*From a large Oil Painting that illustrates Colonel Thornton's tour through
the Highlands of Scotland, in 1786. Painted by SAWREY GILPIN, R.A.
(1733-1807), and PHILIP REINAGLE, R.A. (1749-1833). Repro-
duced by permission of Mrs. Stroyan. See pp. 179, 180.*

than the French. To-day we have our Colonel Thorntons, who adore Poincaré ; but Napoleon's time differed from ours, and only an intrepid man of English birth would have dared then to think of French naturalization. England was menaced, press gangs were capturing recruits, and the humiliation of Washington's victory rested heavily on the national prestige. Defeat by Napoleon would have ruined our country. Yet Thornton was eager to be French. During the brief Peace of Amiens, which enabled Napoleon to mature new plans, Thornton hurried over to France, seeking for naturalization, happily in vain. He was introduced to Napoleon, who gladly received from him a pair of pistols, and seventy couples of foxhounds, offering in exchange Russian and French wild boar, and also, apparently, some wolves, as Thornton enjoyed a few wolf-hunts after he returned home. In 1805 he sold his Yorkshire estate, Thornville Royal, to Lord Stourton, and two or three years later he left Yorkshire for Spye Park, Wiltshire, leading a sort of wild-beast show, at the rear of which were great waggon loads of very costly wines. Such was the patriotism of an English sportsman between the years that separated the death of Nelson from that of Sir John Moore.

In 1814, after Napoleon's first fall, Thornton visited France again, with a party of sportsmen and a pack of hounds, returning to London in March 1815. After Waterloo, his French mania becoming active again, Thornton hired the Château de Chambord, purchased an estate at Pont-sur-Seine, and then styled himself Prince de Chambord and Marquis de Pont ! Two years later he obtained legal domicile in France, but somehow he never got his heart's desire, naturalization. When he died in Paris on March 10th, 1823, Thornton was a legal Englishman, but not by any means a good sportsman, his will disinheriting his heir in order to benefit an illegitimate daughter, Thornvillia Diana, by an English woman of low birth. The validity of his will was contested by Mrs. Thornton on behalf of her son, who seems to have had no Napoleonic bees in his bonnet.

Pictures help to make us acquainted with many peculiar characters. A glamour has been thrown around Thornton by romantic writers on sport, but sport without national service is a very poor thing in a time of peril. If the Colonel had fought under Wellington in Spain and Portugal, his later freaks as Prince de Chambord could be set down to the overstrain of campaigning. Suppose an English sportsman of to-day hired a German estate and called himself by its name. No case of shell-shock has produced anything so amazing as this idea, luckily !

III

We pass on to a complete John Bull, the great George Stubbs, whose life is related in *British Sporting Artists*. He lived from 1724 to 1806, a man of immense physical strength, and a brave innovator who refused to be affected by foreign masters. Only one episode in the life of Stubbs is chronicled by *Farington's Diary*, but it brings before us four painters to whom angling pictures have been attributed. Besides this, it helps us to divine why Farington, though a landscape painter pretty low in the second rank, was able to keep his position as "autocrat of the Royal Academy."

The story dates from 1801, when Stubbs was seventy-seven. Twenty-one years earlier he had been elected R.A., but a quarrel had prevented him from obeying certain rules, and he had remained A.R.A. officially. Jealousies had been active against him for many years, because of the high prices that he received. Even Reynolds, it is believed, earned less than Stubbs for pictures of equal size. But at last, in 1801, a price charged by Stubbs for a large portrait of a horse was challenged by Sir H. Vane Tempest, who declined to pay 300 guineas. Stubbs accepted the challenge, and the case came before the Sheriff's Court. The litigants went for expert witnesses to the Royal Academy. Vane Tempest's opinion of the Members and Associates must have been poor, and almost insulting, as he had no right to believe that professional men belonging to the same society would oppose one another's prices before Old Father Antic, the Law.

Lawrence, Humphrey, and Garrard supported Stubbs, while Hoppner and Opie chose the other side; "and the former," says Farington, "was very violent against the claim of Stubbs, for whom, however, *a full verdict was given.*"

When Hoppner allowed his envy to rage in court against Stubbs, he was forty-three, and an Associate. Opie, too, was an Associate, and in his fortieth year. They were old enough to respect the great veteran Stubbs. Yet Farington relates the story unregretfully. Why? It amused his diary-writing passion, and his position as autocrat of the Academy was aided, rather than hindered, by uncontrolled jealousies among the members.

And now we have to consider two pictures of great interest. One of them has been attributed by some judges to Stubbs, by others to the senior Arthur Devis, while the other is becoming a sort of company in speculative attribution. Its landscape has been given to Farington, and the figure-painting, according to different opinions, suggests Opie, Hoppner, Zoffany, Northcote, Raeburn,



PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG ANGLER, EDWARD WILLIAM LEYBORNE (1764-1843), who in 1780 succeeded to the Estates of Littlecote and Hunstrete Park. In 1807 he assumed the additional surname of Popham. Size 49 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. x 30in. Attributed by some experts to GEORGE STUBBS, A.R.A. (1724-1806), by others to ARTHUR DEVIS, Senior (1708-1787). See pp. 182-183. In the Collection of T. C. G. Mensies, Esq.

Copley, Owen, and even Farington, who had no genius for portraiture. Gainsborough also has been suggested, though Gainsborough's death in 1788 preceded the fashion in dress that the picture represents. Surely, too, no period of Gainsborough's original style resembles the brushwork and colour of this angling picture.

These two oil-paintings being notable as works of art, I have no wish to take an active part in a game of tennis-criticism. It will be enough to review them impartially. They come to us from the second half of the eighteenth century, and we are very fortunate to have them. No attribution can either improve or lower their merits, though their financial value may be affected, a point to be remembered carefully when pictures are old and historical. Works of art being property, criticism and conjecture have limits set to their freedom by the common law, a fact often forgotten by writers on art, who are accustomed to the complete liberty granted to them by press tickets when they go to public exhibitions of present-day work.

The picture attributed by some to Arthur Devis, senior, by others to George Stubbs, belongs to Mr. F. C. G. Menzies, of the Knoedler Galleries. To examine it carefully is to see that much can be said for both attributions, particularly by experts who have seen the figurework done by Stubbs with enamel colours, that he prepared for himself at a great cost in both time and money. The picture is unlike the handiwork of Stubbs if we think only of his portraiture in oil-colours, but as a determined effort to win from oil-pigments the qualities that he tried to get from enamel-painting, the portrait figure may be by him. As for the landscape, it is treated as a background, sternly subordinated to the young angler's erect and handsome figure. Its details have come out with too much emphasis in the reproduction. Note well the shadows thrown by the angler and the shrubs behind him. Sunlight comes from two hours of the day! When a painter works out of doors with intense concentration, he can take this liberty with the sun without becoming conscious of the fact; and the same thing may happen when two artists work in collaboration, one painting the figures, and the other a landscape background.

If two painters had a hand in this angling picture—let us say George Stubbs and Arthur Devis—their duet was a friendly one, apart from the double light. The young angler wears a red waistcoat, a sort of lilacy-grey coat braided with gold, straw-grey breeches, white stockings that look grey, and black shoes with gold buckles. He is the picture; his figure dominates over a large landscape, but it does not make a hard silhouette, unaired and

importunate. The red of the waistcoat is repeated by a tackle-box at the angler's feet, and also dimly in a boat near the watermill.

There is nothing here that Stubbs could not have painted in the manner of his enamel experiments, which the Royal Academy disliked ; but we must remember that he worked sometimes in collaboration, and that the senior Arthur Devis has firm supporters. We need evidence, documented evidence, before we can be at all certain.

Our National Gallery has a delicate little work by Devis, "A Lady in a Park," and the inscription on its frame says that Devis lived from 1708 to 1787. I am able to illustrate two pictures by this artist. One of them is signed, and dated 1749. It belongs to Mr. A. N. Gilbey. The other is very akin to it in general character, and both pictures, viewed as portrait compositions, are more notable than the small single figure in the National Gallery.

Generally, a painter's later technique is freer and looser than the earlier. Now Devis, so far as we know, never interrupted his work as an oil-painter by making long technical researches into another form of art, enamel-painting ; hence it is worth noting that the signed Devis of 1749 is handled with somewhat greater freedom as a whole than the picture attributed both to him and to Stubbs. Further, the controversial work has come down to us as the portrait of Edward William Leyborne, born in 1764, who, at the age of sixteen, succeeded to the estates of Littlecote and Hunstrete Park, and who assumed the additional surname of Popham when he was forty-one. What age is the young angler in this picture ? We cannot say less than sixteen. This brings us to the year 1780, when Devis was seventy-two, and Stubbs fifty-six, and a newly-elected A.R.A. If Devis, at seventy-two, painted this picture, incessant practice since 1749 had neither loosened his handling, nor made it feebly repetitive. The whole work shows a determined eagerness to advance. Now, it was in 1771, at the suggestion of Cosway, that Stubbs began to make his elaborate experiments in enamel-painting, a form of art which required from him a change of technical expression.

Next, the dates of the costumes invite consideration. What do specialists affirm ? Their books, when they speak of the reigns of George II and III, are not sufficiently illustrated, and their text is often uncertain. The 1849 Devis belongs to the twenty-second year of George II's reign, and Planché tells us that this reign "produced no alteration in the general character of the dress." But tie-wigs and bob-wigs were added to the catalogue of wigs, and a good many bob-wigs were worn without powder. Some young men



PORTRAITS OF A FAMILY OF ANGLERS. *From an Oil Painting of the year 1749 by the elder ARTHUR DEVIS (1708-1787). The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection. See pp. 184-186. Compare this plate with the portrait group of Richard Moreton with his Niece and Nephew.*



RICHARD MORETON WITH HIS NIECE AND NEPHEW.
From an Oil Painting (30in. x 28½in.) by ARTHUR DEVIS, SENIOR (1708-1787). Compare this plate with the portrait group of a Family of Anglers; and note the family likeness of the two gentlemen who hold books in the right hand. Reproduced from a Photograph by Messrs. Kneller.

preferred their own hair, so they let it grow long, and powdered it profusely. As early as 1745, a pigtail began to displace the Ramillies tail, with its big bow at top and a small one at its tapering end. "Yet the Ramillies wig," says Planché, "was worn as late as the reign of George III." In other words, fashions changed slowly among people who did not live among the beaux and belles. Round hats, soon after 1778, were worn sometimes in the morning, but the three-cornered cocked hat did not go rapidly out of vogue till 1789, when a reaction against it was caused by the French Revolution. It was deemed too French to be tolerated any longer !

Notice now the hat lying on the ground in the Leyborne portrait. It is not a three-cornered cocked hat. Its brim, edged with gold galloon, is arched behind and circular elsewhere. The coat has lapels, its cuffed sleeves have no lace ruffles, and the waistcoat is short ; three points of fashion which are absent from the 1749 Devis. But the other Devis, the portrait of Richard Moreton with his nephew, a boy angler, has a mixture of fashions, the waistcoats having long flaps, while the coats have lapels. And here a curious question arises. Is there a close family likeness between Moreton's nephew and young Leyborne ? Examine the two faces carefully through a magnifying glass. Do they look like the same face and figure at different ages ? To my mind the faces are very much alike ; but at present we cannot say what the resemblance means. It may be one of cousinship only. That is to say, the two boys may have been the children of two sisters.

Whether the Leyborne portrait be attributed to Arthur Devis, senior, or to George Stubbs, or to both in collaboration, it cannot be studied too attentively in its association with the Devis portrait groups. Viewed as period pictures they are all uncommon examples of sporting art. Some critics decline to be interested by them, and say : "Yes, yes, but several Frenchmen of a somewhat earlier period would have painted them much better. Devis wasn't a Lancret, or a Pater, or a rival of J. F. de Troy, who lived to the middle of the eighteenth century." But Devis, a Lancashire man, steady and tenacious, was true to himself, and a very notable pioneer of that later English school into which Sir David Wilkie put so much popular life touched with humour. Apart from some lessons that he received from the Anglo-Belgian painter Peter Tillemans, a sporting artist, Arthur Devis was mainly self-taught, painting conversation pieces and whole-length portraits of a small size. Neither he nor Stubbs was chosen to be a foundation member of the Royal Academy. Foreigners were chosen instead, probably because they were clubable, while Stubbs and Arthur Devis were more independent.

Indeed, Devis was proud of the fact that he resembled the Pretender. His politics became so annoying to his native town, Preston, that one day he fled, incognito, and came to London. His son Arthur William (1763-1822) was a figure-painter of many merits, and his brother, Anthony T. Devis, who painted water-colours in the old topographical manner, lived to be eighty-seven, dying at Albury, Surrey, in 1817.

To appreciate the value of Arthur Devis to my subject, his angling portraits must be united to some other pictures—six in all—of the eighteenth century. I have chosen “The Fishing Party” reproduced in the first volume of *Farington’s Diary*; a similar picture, not yet known to the public; a typical angling landscape by Tom Smith, of Derby, father of J. R. Smith; three are good works by Zoffany, and the sixth painting is Hogarth’s “Pascall Family,” never before illustrated. Let me introduce these productions.

IV

“The Fishing Party.” It is a large canvas of great interest, bought at a country sale by a medical man, and to-day it belongs to the Victoria Art Gallery, Bath. At present it has no documented history, a singular fact when we remember the many attributed names that keep it inside the game of tennis-criticism. The attributions are of two sorts. One set is busy with its painters, and another with the persons who sat for their portraits.

It has been suggested by some players that the portraits represent King George III, the seated figure on our left, and his daughter the Princess Elizabeth, accompanied by the bald-headed Joseph Farington, who sits shoulder to shoulder with the King, and by Benjamin West, P.R.A. (1792), and Dr. William Coombe, better known as *Dr. Syntax*, who baits a hook for the Princess. If the whole of these assumptions were correct, the picture in an official sense would be a Royal one, and His Majesty alone should wear a hat. Benjamin West, as President of an Institution founded—and at first financed—by George III, would have been a courtier in this matter of etiquette, surely; and surely Dr. Coombe would not have wished to be portrayed as a man of no breeding, seated in the presence of the Princess, and so afraid of fresh air that he could not remove his ugly tall hat. His pose and strong legs are made conspicuous by the narrowness of the punt, which looks out of scale with the portraits and the fat spaniel. Besides, the young man in the print is *too* young for William Coombe, who was born in 1741; so he was more than fifty when this picture was painted, later than 1791. Seek facts in expertism, and never swerve from those that you find!



"THE FISHING PARTY," Victoria Art Gallery, Bath. - *Attributed to many artists. ZOFFANY'S name, for instance, has been associated with THE FIGURE-PAINTING, and FARINGTON'S with THE LANDSCAPE. See pp. 186-187 for a review of the attributions. See also a similar, but inferior, picture facing p. 189.*

To my mind the seated figure on our left is a good portrait—not of George III, but—of a very famous architect, James Wyatt, R.A. (1748–1813). He wears top-boots, tight breeches, a red waistcoat, a blue coat with gilt buttons, and a high-crowned and black beaver hat with a jaunty brim. He looks confident enough to rebuild Westminster Abbey. The finely-built man by his side—a handsome grey figure in the picture—certainly looks like Farington; but the drawing paper on his knee does not bear his initials, J. F., as some persons have thought. A magnifying glass reveals *three* pale touches made by the point of a brush, all with a shape somewhat resembling a fish. As regards the dramatic angler, who has top-boots, ochre-coloured breeches, and a sort of dove-brown coat, he makes much ado because he has landed a fish about as long as his open hand. This portrait is plainly satirical, and it may be one of President West, a man with much official confidence, for he did not learn the Academy's laws and rules. The lady, so far as I can see, has not yet been identified. She is a happy, charming figure, gowned in deep amber and white, relieved near the neck by a fringe of black lace, and by touches in her hat of pale rose and pearly grey. The amber-tinted skirt with its long train, though painted firmly and boldly, has folds which are somewhat too edgy, and there is hardness also in the water eddying behind the lady, which has the same touch of brush as the figure-painting, unlike the rest of the landscape.

Other parts of the landscape are cracked very variously, unlike the figure-painting, which has fared as well as we have a right to expect. It is not often that we see such a variety of cracks in a landscape painted in the seventeen hundred and nineties. Near the creel, on that little floating island, with its peculiar platform of timber, there are some bubbles in the paint, and the background and sky have several spiderweb cracks, some horizontal lines, and many other cracks rather like the patterns left on wet sand by ebbing tides. Whoever painted this landscape, then, knew little about the science of oil pigments. Perhaps he painted generally in water-colour; perhaps he used bitumen for his lay-in, which in those days was called the dead colouring; but, anyhow, he tried to get atmosphere into his work, and he had a feeling for space and amplitude. Though his brushwork is not fine, it has quite a big effect, and helps the figure-painting very well.

Some persons give the landscape to Farington, whose familiar works are monochrome drawings and water-colours. If Farington painted it, why did he forget to sign his name? Only an artist here and there has been

as careful as Farington was in signing and dating his productions. Even his outline sketches are dated and signed, as in a book of them that is owned by Mr. Meatyard, of Museum Street, London. There were two Academicians who painted much in India, Thomas Daniell (1749-1840), and his nephew, William Daniell (1769-1837); and I should like to see their work side by side with "The Fishing Party" at Bath. William Daniell's *A Picturesque Voyage round Great Britain*, planned in 1814, is a very notable work.

As for the figure-painter, he drew firmly and well with his brush, and kept away from the danger of glazing. An attribution says that "the figures are possibly by Zoffany," but they have no glazed harmonies of rich colour, such as we find in Zoffany's typical workmanship. There is a fine example in our National Gallery, for example. I would sooner choose Opie than Zoffany; but I make no choice because objections can be raised fairly against every one of the attributions which have been active in the game of tennis-criticism. The useful and necessary thing is to go on searching for the picture's history. A record of it must exist somewhere, perhaps in old auction catalogues. The work is too mature for an early work by William Owen, who became A.R.A. in 1804, and R.A. two years later. It is too solidly constructed both for Sir William Beechy, R.A., in 1798, and for Thomas Lawrence, R.A., in 1794. James Northcote, who was influenced by "The Cornish Wonder," as Opie was called by Reynolds, is not suggested by the colour or by the handling; and Martin Shee, who became A.R.A. in 1798, at the age of twenty-nine, looks out of the running also, though I have seen work of his with somewhat the same colouring.

The precise date of the costumes cannot well be given, for similar costumes were in vogue for a long time after the seventeen hundred and nineties; but we may choose the span of years from 1792 to 1799, when the real Jean-de-Bry fashion had its beginning. In *Farington's Diary*, vol. i., the picture is placed in the text of 1794. Philip de Loutherbourg, R.A., was very popular then, and also very protean; but his colour is not in this picture. Those who suggest Hoppner are certainly interesting; they may prove to be right, though the figure-painting is not plainly his. The subject would have delighted Raeburn, but—! Raeburn's colour is absent, and the handling also. There is an uncommon weight in these anglers, a hearty liking for bone and muscle and flesh, united to a modelling touch that becomes edgy here and there. These are not the qualities of Romney, and Romney also has been brought into this picture from his æsthetic courtship with Lady Hamilton. A more puzzling picture in the game of tennis-criticism cannot



FISHING PARTY AT HAMPTON ON THAMES: Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence, Miss Crump, Miss Curtis and the Hampton Ferryman. *From an Oil Painting by JOHN RAPHAEL SMITH (1762-1812) See pp. 135-136. The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.*



FISHING PARTY AT HARLEYFORD ON THAMES. *From an Oil Painting of 1790, the Figures by JAMES WALES (1747-1795), the Landscape by "JOHN CAMDEN, ESQ.," of whom nothing is known. Compare this picture with a similar, but superior, work facing p. 187. See also p. 189.*

well be imagined. If only its painters had been humble enough to sign their names !

Curiously, there is a smaller painting which at a first glance resembles this one ; it was rescued from long neglect by Mr. Arthur N. Gilbey ; and an old tablet fixed on its frame says that it was painted by Wales and " John Camden, Esq.," in 1790. It represents a Fishing Party at Harleyford on Thames. At a first view in a photograph the landscape seems to be the same as the picture at Bath, but when the two paintings are closely examined, there are remarkable differences. The Bath picture has a tall cliff, for example, behind the lady, and there is no small floating island in Mr. Gilbey's painting. Here a little breakwater nearly spans the whole river, and the timber platform is much narrower, and its upright bars are higher and more numerous. As we are hunting for facts, not for fancies, we cannot assume that so many differences would appear in two landscapes painted from the same riverside. Although the landscapes are not really alike, their brushwork has points of resemblance, such as occur often when pupils work in the manner of their masters. Trees are conventionalized by the same routine, and this endows them in both pictures with a sort of family likeness.

Nothing can be learnt about " John Camden, Esq.," ; but amateur artists were pretty numerous, both men and women. It has been suggested that Joseph Farington assumed the name of Camden because the publisher of his views of the Thames might have objected to his working for any other patron. Why should this idea be accepted ? If the autocrat of the Royal Academy, the man whom George III liked and trusted, broke a contract, and sneaked afterwards into an *alias*, he cannot be respected by us, and his fame as a man of judgment is a mirage. Besides, Farington's views of the Thames, reproduced as coloured aquatints that look too pretty, are remarkably free from anglers. What evidence is there to connect him with the sport ? Though John Camden did not exhibit, his name has been handed down to us as a painter, and facts are cheering things. Either he or his master, I believe, painted the landscape of " The Fishing Party " now at Bath.

As for Wales, James Wales, his life is recorded. A native of Peterhead, Aberdeenshire, born in 1747, he was educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen. As an artist he was mainly self-taught. At a time when he should have been drawing and painting from the nude, life-size studies, under a good master, he was dabbling small portraits on tinplate ; also from time to time he sold a landscape. At last, being dissatisfied, he travelled southward

to London, where he tried to paint landscapes in the manner of Poussin. Between 1783 and 1793 he sent portraits to exhibitions. In 1791 he went to India, where he died at the age of forty-eight. Indian antiquities delighted him ; native princes helped to keep him busy ; he supplied sketches from which Thomas Daniell painted a picture of Poona Durbar, and worked with Daniell in other ways, doing twenty-four drawings for Daniell's *Oriental Scenery*, for example.

Now, since Wales painted landscapes as well as portraits (of a small size, usually), he could have finished the whole of an angling picture ; there was no need for him to have a collaborator, unless he wished to please Camden, whose patronage he valued. Again, as Wales was not a well-trained craftsman, it is natural that his figure-painting should be very inferior to that of the Bath picture. Several of his anglers have funny legs, very short, and so weak that the big black hats look like burdens. The best portrait is the seated figure on our left, a bald-headed man who holds a portfolio ; he sets us thinking again of Farington, though his body has not the weight and strength of the bald artist in the picture at Bath. Still, there is a resemblance of face, and perhaps the Bath " Fishing Party," painted a few years later, may have been suggested by this joint work by Wales and Camden. No other paintings of the period have the same sort of governing idea.

Zoffany's " Mr. and Mrs. Garrick at Tea entertaining Dr. Johnson and Mr. Bowden, at their Chiswick Villa," a most interesting work, has a fisherman, George Garrick, the actor's brother, but it is not an angling party ; and this applies also to Hogarth's " The Pascall Family," with its pathetic little boy, seemingly a dwarf. This painting is a portrait group, rather darkened by time, with amateur angling added to it as a mild action in accord with Pascall's character. See the plate in colour facing p. 200.

Hitherto it has been thought that Hogarth's use of fishing appeared only in the graphic lesson he composed to ridicule bad perspective ; so I wish that the deep colour of this portrait piece could have been obtained correctly by the blockmakers. It has come out somewhat falsely, and I am sorry, everything by Hogarth being precious. We feel towards him as we do towards Dr. Johnson, and though his art needs no Boswell, every scrap of information about Hogarth himself is entertaining. Mr. W. T. Spencer has an old sepia drawing with handwriting on two of the borders : " Absurdities of false perspective ridicul'd. From a sketch of Mr Hogarth's, being his first Idea, and made at a Friend's house in Company with Mr. Kirby and others, where the Conversation turn'd on that Subject. T. P. L." The whole



MASTER JAMES SAYER, at the age of 13, in the Act of Fishing. Painted in 1770 by JOHANN ZOFFANY, R.A. (1735-1810). Engraved in 1772 by RICHARD HOUSTON. From a Mezzotint Proof lent by Messrs. Ellis and Smith. See p. 192, also the Illustration in Colour from the Original Picture facing p. 193.

intricate drawing is described. The two anglers are women. One of them has landed a big fish, two and a half times as long as her head, and yet not heavy enough to bend the top of her rod ; and the women are smaller than a swan some twenty yards away from them. When perspective is turned into a farce, the difficulties of pictorial art are made wonderfully evident to everybody.

Zoffany was influenced by Hogarth, yet remained his counterpart, often looking at English folk through Italian eyes, and memories of Italian sunlight found their way frequently into his English colours. Yet he was not Italian by birth. Born at Frankfort-on-Main in 1735, his father a Bohemian Jew, John Zoffany ran away from home at about the age of thirteen, after " borrowing " a sum of gold from his father's money-box. At first he fled to Vienna, thence on a timber raft down the Danube, onwards somehow to Rome, a prodigy among pilgrims ; and at Rome, aided by friendships that his courage and genius won for him, he studied art for about a dozen years. Then roaming seemed better than Rome, and, travelling into Germany, he settled at Coblenz for two or three years, marrying there a girl who had a small fortune of her own. The young couple quarrelled, and the wife's money dwindled rapidly. What was Zoffany to do ? He heard of England as a country where painters, and particularly foreign painters, found patrons. He could arrive there with about a hundred pounds, mainly his wife's money, it is believed. About 1761 he tried to make a living in London, after buying a gold watch, a gold-headed cane, and a suit of clothes *à la mode*, that gave him the confident air of a *Maccaroni*.¹ But all in vain. Zoffany sank deeper and deeper into poverty, till at last fortune began to smile. Stephen Rimbault employed him, so did Benjamin Wilson, a clever painter in oils ; and from this beginning he rose into great success. Personal vanity being as common then as it is to-day, commissions for portraits came to him frequently, but he touched besides a good many phases of eighteenth-century life and character. He loved the homely, intimate life of the people, for example, and united it gracefully to portraiture. He hated classic drapery and arrangement, and took pride in representing the natural folds and the textures of brocade, satin, silk, cloth, and velvet. In his own way he was a realist, and without the frequent vulgarity that Dutch realists had added to exquisite brushwork. Zoffany's theatrical portraiture is represented very well at the Garrick Club, side by side with its influence on some English painters ; and the

¹ See *John Zoffany, R.A., His Life and Work*, by Lady Victoria Manners and Dr. G. C. Williamson, London, John Lane, The Bodley Head, MCMXX, p. 4.

Glasgow Gallery has one of his finest genre pieces, very delicate and tender in colour, "A Family Party," a Watteauish composition of five figures, with a boy and girl practising the minuet to the music of a lute. "*Que de chose dans un Minuet !*" cried an old French dancing master named Marcel. Zoffany thought so too, and minuetted a simple subject into a good picture.

You will find his name among the Foundation Members of the Royal Academy ; you will find, too, that the nomad in his blood made him not more loyal to England than he had been to his foster-mother Rome. Between 1773 and 1779 he ran away from her, and was at work in Italy. Later, for seven years, as though determined to ruin his weakened health, he visited India, a continent which would be greatly advertised by the impeachment of Warren Hastings (1786). After his return to England in 1790, he continued to paint, but with a failing hand. Zoffany lived to be seventy-five, dying at Strand-on-the-Green, near Kew, London, on November 11th, 1810.

This book has four plates after his pictures. The portrait of "Master James Sayer, at the age of Thirteen," angling near the outskirts of a wood, is given both in colour from the original painting, and also in monochrome from a famous engraving by Richard Houston, who made his mezzotint in 1772, two years after this good study of English boyhood was painted.

It is interesting always to note how much liberty the old engravers were granted by artists when they translated paintings into black-and-white. Constable had a quarrel with David Lucas, his great interpreter, who declined to be a slave to any picture. The disagreement was a brief one, happily, Constable having learnt from a very hard struggle that artists in love with freedom should be tolerantly peaceful towards other men.¹ Zoffany, too, gave his engraver a pretty free hand. Note, for instance, that Houston has altered the position of the creel and hat, and that Zoffany's place for them is the better one. There is a change also in the boy's expression of face, but not an improvement. On the other hand, Houston's boulders look more solid, more stone-like, than the painter's, and his background is more defined, like his handling of the boy's limp coat and old waistcoat. Both coat and waistcoat have pockets, and Zoffany's observation has failed him here, for he has forgotten to cram even one pocket with those oddments that lads of the eighteenth century carried, jumbled together, just as boys carry them now. As a rule, Zoffany notes, with quiet humour, habits and

¹ According to Farington, Constable painted some big portraits at £2 and £3 apiece ! When the sitter's hand was painted, £3 was the price he received ! If *Farington's Diary* had been published a century ago, a great many of its gossipy brevities could have been verified by critics.



MASTER JAMES SAYER, at the age of 13. *An Oil Painting by JOHANN ZOFFANY, R.A. (1733-1810). In the possession of Lady Sayer.*

customs that character makes and keeps, just as he records the varying taste shown in furniture and bric-à-brac. His biographers, writing of his attitude towards angling, say, without enough regard for the muscular exercise of fly-fishing :

" Fishing rather appealed to Zoffany as a suitable employment to be represented in pictorial form. Perhaps the very necessity for a fisherman to keep still was a reason for selecting that attitude when a portrait was desired. Whatever may have been the reason, it is characteristic of Zoffany's groups that there are several in which the characters are shown similarly engaged. We have already seen it in the Blair Atholl picture, and we have alluded to it in the portrait of the Sayer boy, who appears in the well-known engraving published by his father as in the act of fishing.

" The same incident appears in the group belonging to Mrs. Spencer Percival, a delightful composition. Here, we have Mr. and Mrs. John Burke, with their son and daughter, and Zoffany the artist forming one of the family. One girl holds a fishing-rod, and her brother has his foot on a basket which contains fish. Mr. Burke is reading the newspaper, his wife standing near him and resting her hand on his shoulder, while Zoffany, holding a silver snuff-box (exquisitely painted, by the way), has gathered up in his arms the youngest and favourite child, who was, if tradition tells a true story, also his god-daughter.

" The children are painted with much charm and sympathy, their expressions and attitudes being easy and unconscious. In grouping the figures of this picture Zoffany has departed from the conventional pyramidal arrangement, and by so doing has made his composition more natural and unstudied, so that the spectator feels that the family, instead of being formally posed, has been caught unawares without that stiffness which sometimes characterizes a portrait group.

" Yet another fishing group is the one representing Mr. John Yorke and Colonel Coore, now belonging to Mr. T. E. Yorke. His ancestor is seated holding a book, but the friend has just landed a fish which he is in the act of taking off the hook. The colouring of this picture is delightful, the scarlet coat with green facings, and Mr. Yorke's brown suit being well set off against the stones and trees in the distance. . . ." ¹

If Zoffany did not angle himself, we may be certain that he made use of the sport, because he came into frequent intimacy with fishermen, and because it helped him to put into his work the thing that he liked best—truth

¹ *John Zoffany, R.A.*, by Lady Victoria Manners and Dr. G. C. Williamson, *London, John Lane*, pp. 156-157. In the picture last-named, John Yorke, in a brown suit, is seated below a tree, right, with a large black-and-white dog lying between his knees on the ground. Colonel Coore, of Scruton Hall, Bedale, Yorks, in scarlet coat with green facings, white satin knee breeches, and white silk stockings, is on our left, seated on a rock, and his back turned towards a stream.

free from affectation, which enabled him to show attractively what his sitters were when at ease. Benjamin Wilson, whose work sometimes is rather like Zoffany's, and whose name should be much better known and respected than it is to-day, tried also, but with less variety, to keep away from formal composition, and to be intimate and homely.

The Zoffany family group at Blair Castle was painted in 1767 ; it represents John, Third Duke of Atholl, with his rod and line, on the Banks of the Tay at Dunkeld, accompanied by his wife and seven children. For this picture the Duke paid 180 guineas. It measures 63 in. by 36 in. Its landscape, we are told, representing the Tay and the Hill of Craigvenian, with the Atholl cairn on it, was painted probably by Charles Stewart, a miniaturist, and brother of Anthony Stewart. If so, the canvas was brought up to London by coach, and Zoffany carried out his work from sittings when the family were in town ; but we cannot suppose that he left untouched the background prepared for him by Stewart, because figures and their background need the same atmosphere. To paint portraits over a dry landscape, without retouching the background, would be foolish, for the figures would look hard and unaired.

There used to be a good fishing party by Zoffany at Laleham, with a boat in it, and a boy angler standing in the boat, and holding up a fish for his mother and two sisters on the bankside to admire. His father is seated in the boat, with a rod across his knee. This picture is one of the Rosoman family, who lived on a riverside estate near Richmond. Does anyone know its present whereabouts ? A copy of it in water-colour is reproduced by Zoffany's biographers, Dr. Williamson and Lady Victoria Manners. One of its good points is a well-drawn St. Bernard dog, a white fellow with a black head.

V

Several other phases of eighteenth-century work belong to my subject. There is a collection of ten mezzotints of fishing, and fishing-boat scenes, all printed for Robert Sayer, and Sayer and Bennett, between 1772 and 1776, and attributed to Vernet and B. Peters. These prints are to be seen, every now and then, but rarely all together, bound up as an oblong folio. J. Peirson, also, is worth some attention from collectors, like the younger Charles Catton, son of Charles Catton, R.A., and a Londoner, born in 1756. He emigrated to America, 1804, and died there, fifteen years after. His view of Kelso



MR. AND MRS. GARRICK AT TEA, entertaining Dr. Johnson and Mr. Bowden, at their Chiswick Villa. *From an Oil Painting by JOHANN ZOFFANY, R.A. (1795-1810). See p. 100. Catalogued in the Garrick State, Earl of Portland's Collection.*

Bridge and Abbey, with a man angling, engraved by Jukes, 1793, is quite a good thing. Houston mezzotinted after Pyle, on a plate $5\frac{1}{2}$ in. by $5\frac{3}{8}$ in., a plate called "August," with a girl seated under a tree, right, a rod in her left hand. With the other hand she holds the line, from which a small fish dangles. Behind her are a glimpse of river, and a clouded sky. A basket of fish is placed on a small bank under the tree. The girl is not pretty, but she looks towards us for admiration. No doubt her costume would look well on Polly Peachum.

T. Cartright, in 1802, aquatinted a print of great interest to Americans, after G. Beck, of Philadelphia, showing anglers near the Great Falls of the Potomac. Charles Turner, in 1790, engraved and published, after a painting by J. J. Masquerier, a fine portrait of a noted angler, John Kirby, who was keeper of Newgate Prison, a stout man with soft flesh, drooping eyelids, and a sloping forehead that looks heavy and stubborn. The engraving is known as the earliest dated print by Charles Turner, and Masquerier should be remembered because he had ideas of a modernist kind on light and realism. His influence formed many pupils. An oval portrait of John Kirby was chosen as frontispiece for *The Angler's Museum*, 1784. In this print the bull-necked keeper of Newgate smiles, and grasps a fishing-rod with his right hand.

I like the technical prints in Sir John Hawkins's first edition of *The Compleat Angler*, 1760. There is a good one of a fisherman's workshop, for instance, and another of well-made tackle, including a good reel drawn from a position that reveals the whole of its mechanism. Tackle improved greatly between Cotton's time and that of Onesimus Ustonson, a tackle maker who advertised in the 1770 edition of John Smith's *True Art of Angling*, and who made a multiplying reel, seemingly before any other craftsman. Modern fly-dressing began with Richard Bowlker's *The Art of Angling*, whose first edition was brought out in 1747, according to the catalogue of the Bodleian Library. There were two Bowlkers, Richard and Charles, father and son, of Ludlow, in Shropshire. In the third edition of *The Art of Angling*, Charles Bowlker is given as author. Sixteen editions were published, or more, by the year 1854, a splendid success, and won by very useful knowledge. On the other hand, the eighteenth century added but little to the art of prose-writing on the angler's craft and its enjoyments. It produced no Stoddart and no Colquhoun, no Pulman, no Davy, no Penn; and the prose of Ronalds is better than that of his eighteenth-century forerunners. The tradition of writing poetry on angling was kept alive, and some lines by Gay have a

humanitarian motive that recalls to memory Shakespeare's protest against hare-hunting :

" Around the steel no tortured worm shall twine,
No blood of living insect stain my line ;
Let me, less cruel, cast the feathered hook,
With pliant rod across the pebbled brook."

Putting aside a good many artists such as William Ashford and William Bellers, I end this chapter with a few words on three painters, George Mullins, Edward Smith, recently discovered, and Tom Smith, of Derby. Mullins flourished between 1756 and 1775. At the Ashmolean, Oxford, he is represented by a fishing piece that few anglers know. In its foreground are two young couples, seated, and a catch lying on the ground. A fisherman is busy in the middle distance, and a waterfall gives movement to an early landscape, which does not belong to the topographical school.¹ It was Tom Smith, of Derby, who handed on to Mullins, and to many others, the fine and brave attitude to landscape painting that Francis Barlow and Marmaduke Cradock had brought into sporting art. I illustrate one of his angling pictures. He painted many typical scenes in the Peak, and Vivares engraved forty of his pictures, to be published by Boydell. Other works by Tom Smith were turned into prints by Mason and W. Elliott. The date of his birth is uncertain, but he died in 1769, at Bristol. Among Elliott's engravings is a portrait of "The Cullen Arabian," with a mare, which has too much realism ; also a portrait of "Trajan and Match'em running at Newmarket." Racing, horse-breaking, angling, these subjects give variety to the many prints after Tom Smith. There is a good angler landing a fish in a print described as "The High Force. Cataract on the River Teece [*Tees*], which divides the Counties of York and Durham." It falls down a rock of granite, about twenty-three yards, into a large circular basin. The print is a big one, and the date is December 1766, while the engraving that I reproduce, a scene on the River Wie in Monsal Dale, is twenty-three years earlier, and thus more valuable historically. When it was published, on June 21st, 1743, Gainsborough was only sixteen, and Richard Wilson twenty-nine, but not yet a landscape painter. Paul Sandby was only eighteen, and George Barret, senior, two or three years younger. In other words, all the painters of the eighteenth century now famed as early leaders in the art of landscape painting were junior to Tom Smith, of Derby, a pioneer full of courage, and a collector also of prints and drawings. Yet he has been greatly, or woefully, neglected.

¹ See Index, for an account of Mullins.



A ROCKY LANDSCAPE AND A FISHING PARTY. *From an Oil Painting by GEORGE MULLINS, of Dublin, who flourished from 1750 to 1775. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Signed and dated 1772. See p. 190.*

His native town has gathered together no history of his life and work. A great many persons do not know that he was the father of J. R. Smith, whose youthful art-education he directed. And I have not yet known a collector of angling prints who has had an example of Tom Smith's bravery. There is an angling party, for example, in a "View of Anchor Church, so called from its having been the habitation of an Anchorite." The church is a large cavern in the face of a fine rock, on the River Trent, four miles south of Derby. Forty views by Tom Smith, engraved by Vivares and others, were published with a French title and advertisement, showing that engravers and their publishers had confidence in their choice of an English landscape painter.

Tom Smith's figure-drawing is worth attention, for it suggests plainly that it was he who made the designs engraved by Burgh for Moses Browne's first edition of *The Compleat Angler* (1750). I am sure, indeed, to take an example, that he drew "The Fishing on the Dove," two anglers of George II's time in a characteristic landscape, with peaky rocks beyond the river. Again, Major Oswald Magniac has a sketch in water-colour of a Georgian angler, a sketch from a notebook, slightly tinted, and closely observed, which may well be by Tom Smith.¹

For the rest, just a year before his death, that is, in 1768, Smith sold his collection of prints and drawings by auction, in Coventry Street, London, William Darres being the auctioneer. The sale occupied four evenings, and began January 13th. I give these facts because a few catalogues of this good sale have come down to us, and at present they are little known to collectors, though early auction catalogues are always valuable to students. The British Museum has a copy, and there is another at the Art Gallery, Derby. The catalogue is cosmopolitan, comprising French, Flemish, Italian, and English masters.

From Tom Smith we pass to Edward Smith, who at present is a complete mystery. A brief time ago he appeared at Christie's, and Mr. A. N. Gilbey bought his picture. The painting itself is unsigned, but behind the canvas there is some incomplete information, written on the canvas, not on the stretcher, and saying that Edward Smith invented and painted it at Fowey, 1773.

The work is a conversation piece associated with angling. It is not illustrated in this book because it came to my knowledge too late. It shows clearly that its painter was an ambitious man with a very remarkable style, and that he had "found himself," working with assurance, and not over-anxious about his defects. Yet he never exhibited in London, and at present

¹ See the small plate in colour facing p. 201.

nothing at all definite is known about him. Inference alone is our present guide. Though Edward Smith painted in oil-colours, he had no liking for effects of colour produced by these pigments, for his picture has the peculiar qualities of colour that pastels give when they are handled with delicate and decorative skill. There are subtle tints in pastels that gradate from positive colour towards white and grey; this gradation appealed strongly to Edward Smith, and he tried to transfer it into his oil-painting. This adventure alone, and the considerable measure of success that it won, would make his picture very notable among English paintings of the eighteenth century; but there is another thing as noteworthy. The surface of his paint caused me to think at once of egg-shell china. Now and then a similar surface may be seen in oil-paintings by the Rev. Matthew William Peters, who became R.A. in 1777; but Edward Smith's colour differs from that of Peters. Another early artist of the Royal Academy, Francis Cotes, a Foundation Member, transferred pastel tints into oil-painting, but not in the manner of Edward Smith. If, then, Edward Smith studied under either Cotes or Peters, he did not attempt to annex their styles.

After seeing his picture, I remembered two paintings which, at different times, separated by about nineteen years, had attracted me greatly. One of them belonged to the late James Orrock, R.I., the portrait of a happy little girl in rose gathering honeysuckle, a picture almost pastel-like in purity of colour, and with a surface akin to that of egg-shell china. Its authorship was unknown, and visitors suggested I know not how many masters. The other painting is a portrait also, but of an old lady, a noble old lady, rather wistful with the burden of her memories. This picture is in Lord Crewe's collection at Epsom, and family tradition says that it was painted by Francesco Zuccarelli, who came to England twice, his second visit lasting from 1752 to 1773. He was a Foundation Member of the Royal Academy.

As a working hypothesis, I have chosen Zuccarelli as the master of Edward Smith. In the Print Room of the British Museum you will find two body-colour drawings by Zuccarelli, quite notable compositions, with pastel-like colouring; and if you turn to the *Dictionary of National Biography* you will see that an Englishman named Smith advised Zuccarelli to visit England. The adviser was a very noted man, who had established himself at Venice, and who had money enough to gather together a great library, and another fine collection of pictures, coins, and gems. I am referring to Joseph Smith, who lived from 1682 to 1770. George III bought Smith's library for £10,000, and his art treasures for £20,000.



ANGLER OF GEORGE THE SECOND'S REIGN.
From an unsigned Drawing, possibly by TOM SMITH,
 OF DERBY (D. 1769). *The Oswald Magniac Collection.*



ANGLERS IN AN EARLY WATER-COLOUR.
 Artist unknown. *The Oswald Magniac Collection.*



ANGLERS ON THE WIE IN MONSAL DALE, NEAR BAKEWELL,
1743. Engraved by VIVARES after THOMAS SMITH, of Derby
(-D. 1769). Reproduced from a Print in the John Lane Collection. See pp. 100, 107.

There is an amusing reference to Joseph Smith in a letter written by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to the Countess of Bute. It is dated Venice, October 11th, 1758, when Smith was seventy-six. Yet it concerns the great collector's recent marriage to a sister of John Murray, British resident at Venice, and afterwards ambassador at the Porte :

"... Smith has lately married Murray's sister, a beauteous virgin of forty, who, after having refused all the peers in England, because the nicety of her conscience would not permit her to give her hand when her heart was untouched, remained without a husband till the charms of that fine gentleman determined her to change her condition, who is only eighty-two. . . ." ¹

At present my research ends here, but I am trying to find out whether Joseph Smith had a painter-nephew named Edward, and, if so, whether Edward studied under Zuccarelli. If Edward Smith did not die suddenly, soon after painting his conversation piece with anglers in it, other examples of his work must be extant, perhaps in Venetian collections, if not also in England. Smallpox was very common, and research may draw blank. Meantime, let me appeal for help to readers of this book.

Whoever Edward Smith may have been, his picture is a genuine "find," being unlike any other painting wherein anglers of the eighteenth century are active. On the left-hand side of the composition there is a grey-blue garden seat, from which an old lady dictates a letter, or a message, to a pretty girl in grey-white, who has to write it down, sitting at a small table. A young fellow in mauvy grey looks on. Behind the seat is another young man, dressed in French grey, his waistcoat trimmed with gold braid; he holds a fish dangling from a line. On his left hand is a girl in white, with a rod in her hand, and near to her is a middle-aged man in brown and red, also with a rod, which rests against his right shoulder. The composition extends across the picture from left to right, that is, from the spectator's left hand; and in the right-hand corner, leaning against some stones, is a black page-boy in green, with red wristbands, and a red collar to his coat. Behind, on our right, is a Georgian house, with a good approach of stone steps, and several classic statues. The rest of the background, left and centre, has gentle hills of a pale, bluey-green tint, and some tall and thin trees painted in pastel hues of peculiar greeny-blue.

With this picture to remember as a remarkable contrast, we move now into the seventeenth century.

¹ A feminine overstatement.

CHAPTER IX

SOME OF WALTON'S CONTEMPORARIES

I

SOME old literary customs are plainly wrong, yet they are accepted by readers as time-honoured creeds; even critics fearing, or declining, to review them with candour.

In Waltoniana we find several examples of this perpetuated misjudgment. Charles Cotton is generally accepted as Walton's literary child, for example, because editors (as a rule) continue to repeat a mistake of kind-heartedness made by Walton himself when he printed, as an addition to *The Compleat Angler*, Cotton's very able imitation of the master's manner and spirit. Andrew Lang's editing is an exception, while a more important authority, Mr. R. B. Marston, welcomes Cotton as author of the *Second Part* of *The Compleat Angler*; and relates again how he wrote it in about ten days, at his home, Beresford Hall, on the Dove. Cotton had heard that a new edition (the fifth) of *The Compleat Angler* was about to appear, so he made up his mind to do suddenly what he had long contemplated, viz. to write an account of clear-water fishing for trout and grayling, to support Walton's general instructions. We are told, too, that Cotton's rapid mimicry of Walton's tone and manner not only achieved the best work on fly-fishing which up to his time had appeared, but also that it remained the best for a century; "indeed it has not only been reprinted, as a matter of course, with nearly all editions of Walton, but it has provided material for almost every writer on the subject since."

Yet these facts have nothing to do with the main point—the custom, seldom set aside, of putting Walton and Cotton within the same binding, the same frame, instead of keeping them apart, as two distinct artists in words.

"It must be admitted," says Mr. R. B. Marston, "that Cotton did his work admirably and succeeded better than one could have thought possible in catching the idea which Walton had in writing his book, viz. to give his information in the guise of imaginary conversations. I think he is as natural, though not so quaint and humorous, and quite as instructive as Walton;



THE PASCALL FAMILY, with Mr. Pascall in the Act
of Angling. *From an Oil Painting by WILLIAM HOGARTH*
(1697 - 1764). *By permission of D. Croal Thomson, Esq.*

and his constant references to his old friend, expressing his esteem for him as a master of the art and as a man, are wholly delightful."

It is easy and enjoyable to regard Cotton as a man of genius, whose imitation of Walton's manner and temper is very good ; but, of course, the nearer an imitation is in style to its model, and this model a masterpiece, the more necessary it is to keep them apart when they are framed or bound. Further, Walton tells us that his book is a picture of his own disposition, especially in such days and times as he has laid aside business, and has gone a-fishing with honest Nat. and R. Roe ; " but they are gone," he adds, " and with them most of my pleasant hours, even as a shadow, that passeth away, and returns not." This means that Walton's picture of his own disposition is brought before us by its author in association with his mourning for the loss of two beloved angling companions ; and hence it has no concern with Cotton, or with any other person who gained influence over his ageing mind and failing judgment.

In 1676, when Cotton was allowed to extend *The Compleat Angler* into a second part, Walton was eighty-three ; and the old man admitted also within the same book-binding a reprint of Colonel Robert Venables, *The Experienced Angler*, the composite work bearing a very ambitious title, *The Universal Angler*. Venables was a noted soldier who had been one of Cromwell's officers, and his very useful and entertaining little book was published for the first time in 1662, just two years after he was made governor of Chester. Walton wrote for it a commendatory letter, but he did not know Venables personally. Mr. A. N. Gilbey has been so kind as to lend me his copy of the first edition, and I find that Venables gives an epitome of the practical aspects of his subject. Walton's letter is very interesting. It says, among other notable things, that Walton, in 1662, has been " for thirty years past, not only a lover but a practiser of that innocent Recreation," angling. *Thirty years past !* If these words are accepted as entirely true, Walton began to angle in 1632, when Cotton was two years old, and when Walton himself was thirty-nine, and thus approaching middle-age. So his fishing companionship with the Roes cannot have had in it any boyish pranks, hitches, and scrapes. It must have been a mature friendship, with a retentive memory ; and hence the beautiful tone of Walton's reference to their death. So I return to the main question : What right have we as reasonable persons to bind up Cotton with Walton, and to call his work the second part of Walton's masterpiece ?

If we answer that Walton himself, in his eighty-third year, approved

this act, we put ourselves out of court, because he approved also the presence of Venables in his fifth edition ; this second mistake of art his editors have not repeated, though Venables, rationally, is more acceptable than Cotton, because his little book is not an imitation of Walton's manner and temper. As literary work it is humble ; as a seventeenth-century manual on practical fishing, it supplements Walton's knowledge in a good many ways. Venables, too, shows his own disposition plainly, and it is one to be liked. His eyes trouble him, so we may suppose that his career as a soldier has been unkind to him ; and he is obliged to give up angling at night for big trout in the still deeps, because cold and dews impair his health.¹ The idealism in angling he leaves to poetical writers, and he ends his book with two principles of workaday good sense :

“ Deny not part of what your endeavours shall purchase unto any sick or indigent persons, but willingly distribute a part of your purchase to those who may desire a share.

“ Make not a profession of any recreation, lest your immoderate love to the same bring a cross with it on the same.”

Similarly, in his preface, he shows that his choice of angling as a sport is mainly practical, as hawking and hunting :

“ these noble Recreations, . . . fall not within the compass of every one's ability to pursue, being as it were only entailed on great Persons and vast estates ; for if meaner Fortunes seek to enjoy them, Actæon's Fable often proves a true story, and these birds of prey not seldom quarry upon their masters. . . .”

Venables and Walton are antithetical as writers on angling, and hence there would be no make-believe if *The Experienced Angler* were bound together in the same cover with *The Compleat Angler* ; while Cotton certainly

¹ The late D. B. Fearing came in touch with two portraits of Robert Venables, one in the Institute of Jamaica at Kingston, among the portraits of the Old Governors of Jamaica, and the other in England, at Wincham, Cheshire, in the Townshend Collection (see *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 58, p. 206). Mr. Fearing, in September 1913, sent a photograph of the Jamaica portrait to Mr. H. T. Sheringham. It is a Kit-cat portrait showing Venables in armour, standing towards our right, his face seen in a three-quarter view, and his large dark eyes looking towards the spectator, half humorously. A long face, clean shaven, apart from a small moustache that fringes the smiling lips ; the expression is shrewd and sensitive, but with enough strength of chin for a man of action. Dark hair parted down the middle, and falling to the slim shoulders, where it rests against a deep white collar that contrasts very well with the armour. Venables had a trying life, particularly in 1655, when he failed in the expedition against Hispaniola, angering Cromwell, who shut him up in the Tower. After Cromwell's death Venables put himself under Monk, and became a Royalist again.



*Angling on river banks, trowling for pike,
Is noble sport, when as the fish doth strike,*

ANGLING.

*And when your pleasures over, then at night
You and your friends, do eat them with delight*

needs a separate binding, his work being so clever as literary ventriloquism that it lowers the value of Walton's originality.

II

While Waltonians have been studying Charles Cotton, and sometimes Robert Venables, and some other seventeenth-century writers, like Richard Franck and Thomas Barker, they have kept their readers in the dark concerning the work of Francis Barlow, who, had they examined the times of Walton with liberal care, would have appealed to them as the father of English sportsmanship in English prints and pictures.¹

Two years ago Barlow was unknown—because forgotten—as a painter, and many students of English art, overpassing also the genius of William Dobson, Barlow's contemporary, used to speak of William Hogarth as the first Englishman who handled a brush with power enough to begin an English school of oil-painting. At the time of Hogarth's birth in London, in 1697, Barlow was about seventy-one and within six or seven years of his death somewhere at Westminster; while Dobson's brief life of thirty-six years had ended in 1646, seven years before the publication of Walton's masterpiece. In 1646 Barlow was twenty, or thereabouts; and a few years later his work was noticed in a pocket-book written by Richard Symonds, who set down the fact that Barlow had received £8 for a painting of fishes. This price in its purchasing value equalled about £80 of to-day's money. But we must remember that colours were dearer than they are now, and that it was much less easy to move canvases from place to place. Barlow, like other painters, often worked at country houses, sometimes on decorations for ceilings, which he improved with compositions in which birds were used; and among the framed pictures which I have been able to find by him, four are large, and three are huge, measuring 13 ft. 3 in. by 9 ft. 2 in. These were painted for a hunting-hall at Pyrford, near Woking, belonging to Mr. Denzil Onslow, an ancestor of Lord Onslow; and to-day they hang on a great staircase at Clandon Park. One of them ranks high among the most important fish pictures produced by the British school. It is signed, and dated 1667. As a pioneering achievement of Walton's time it is a classic, with a decorative power and charm that suggest a design for an excellent piece of tapestry. Anglers cannot overvalue it because no finer pictorial record of the Waltonian era is likely to be discovered.

¹ In *British Sporting Artists* I give all that my research has yet discovered about Barlow.

At Shardeloes, near Amersham, Mr. E. T. Tyrwhitt Drake has a long-inherited collection of Barlows, and one of them may be the very painting of fish that Richard Symonds noticed. It looks earlier in style than the picture at Clandon Park, and its great catch of freshwater fish is open to some criticism; still, considered as a piece of work by a young Englishman of Cromwell's days, it is notable and valuable. The Tyrwhitt Drake of the period may well have paid £8 for it, as an act of encouragement.

Its colour is harmed by a staining of old dust which cannot be wholly removed; but the handling is not at all timid, and it shows the painter's love of birds and beasts and fish. The pike in the foreground seems to foretell Dean Swift's Brobdingnag; he measures about 4 ft. 4 in., and his body is ill-shaped, as though overburdened with spawn, unlike the pike in Lord Onslow's picture. Careful observation is shown in the wood pigeons, and the flying wild duck, and also in the squirrel that looks down from a tree upon the dead fish. Below the squirrel is a kingfisher, perched on a tree-stump, but he has nearly eluded the photographer. A Dutch painter of the same period, Abraham van Oosterwyck, liked subjects of this kind, and some of Barlow's work has been given to him. Perspective is subordinated to decoration, in order that no part of the design may make what the French call "a hole in the wall" by suggesting distance that recedes to a horizon far-off.

Thanks to Mr. F. T. Sabin, I am able to illustrate a drawing by Barlow in which coursing and fishing are united in the pleasure grounds belonging to a house with an E-shaped frontage. Angling is placed in the middle distance, and thus in the second rank of sports, reversing the order given to it by Walton's opening pages, as by Dame Bernes of the fifteenth century. It is a pity that cattle and horses were put in those distant fields on our right; they are obtrusive, and harm a lively and pleasant composition. Barlow, pretty often, is afraid of mute spaces in the patterning of his design. Again and again, so to speak, there are too many violins in his orchestra, and they compete against one another.

Among Barlow's original etchings there is one of a happy and handsome angler seated on a bankside, and enjoying himself in a mood of the contemplative man's recreation. It appears in the three careful editions that Barlow himself published of *Æsop's Fables*.¹ Five years after he issued

¹ The first edition in 1666, with a dedication to Sir Francis Prujean, who died in the same year; the second edition in 1687, with revised text, and verses by Aphra Behn, also with a dedication to William Earl of Devonshire, and thirty-one new plates added to the 112 etchings



AT SUNSET AFTER A DAY'S FISHING. Reproduced from an original Picture by FRANCIS BARLOW in Lord Onslow's Collection at Clarendon Park, Gailford, 12 ft. 3 in. x 9 ft. 2 in. Signed and dated 1667. See p. 203.

the first edition, he designed a set of plates for a publication to be called *Severall Wayes of Hunting, Hawking and Fishing, According to the English Manner*. Five of his drawings were etched by his friend W. Hollar, and seven others, I believe, were done by one of Hollar's pupils, who copied his master's style, and whose name is not given. Etchings by Barlow himself would have been preferable; but we are lucky to have what his interpreters were able to do in an age when artists had a stern struggle. The subjects chosen by Hollar were angling, river fishing, salmon fishing, hare-hunting, and the title-page. Under every etching there are four lines of explanatory verse, which may come to us from Barlow himself. For he seems to have attempted rhymes, and with no more success than J. M. W. Turner attained in that MS. of the *Fallacies of Hope*, from which he quoted in a good many R.A. catalogues.

"River Fishing" is one sort of commercial fishing; it shows how pike, perch, chub, and bream, with other smaller fish, were caught in nets by men and boys. Several of the men carry long poles to stir up any fish that seek shelter in deep pools, or among thick reeds, or in holes along the banksides.

"Salmon Fishing" also is commercial, and very clever as an episode of river life in the seventeenth century, quite probably in the Thames. Three of the fishermen have wading boots, but the tops do not protect enough of the thigh. They cover the knees somewhat flappily, leaving abundant space wherein the knees can bend. Though useless for deepish wading, they enable us to see that if these boots were waterproof Walton might have been a wader had he wished to throw a fly from a shallow place in a river. Some anglers of the period waded, and we have seen that Colonel Venables disliked it, for a reason which implies that wading boots let in the water.

These prints of trade fishing after Barlow should be very interesting to the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers of London, which as late as 1767 purchased from Thomas Bennett eight paintings of fish—not by English artists, but—by Arnold Van Hacken, a Dutchman.¹ The Company has also a still life of fish by another Dutch painter, Isaac Van Denyer, who in 1670 had some reputation. English art is not yet represented as it ought to be,

of the first edition. The third edition dates from 1703, when Barlow was about seventy-seven years old. His life ends with this third attempt to earn money out of his designs for *Æsop's Fables*. It is said that he died poor, but I have not yet been able to confirm this old report. A printer trusted him in 1703; but some of his old patrons may have helped him to pay the bill. In 1666 he had a place of business called "The Golden Eagle," somewhere in New Street, near Shoe Lane. The Great Fire ravaged this street, and many copies of his book were destroyed.

¹ Mr. H. T. Sheringham has a well-painted still-life of a salmon, apparently in the style of Arnold Van Hacken.

so I venture to make two suggestions : first, that the Company of Fishmongers should obtain large photographs of Barlow's paintings of freshwater fish ; next, that big photographs of the etchings after his fishing compositions could be obtained by turning the prints into lantern slides, and by photographing their screened enlargements.

The print called "Angling" in Barlow's little set I have chosen for illustration, and reference to it as a tapestry-like composition is made in the Prefatory Chapter (pp. 7-8). A few points of detail invite attention. It has been said that several of the figures, and particularly the gentleman with long hair on our left, are too well dressed for sport ; and a writer in *Country Life* has gone so far as to express his belief that the fine costumes represented in many early angling prints are not to be viewed as correct history. "It is not to be thought," he says, "that it is thus that either sex really went fishing, but we may suppose that it was thus that their public liked to see them shown." As a matter of fact, there is really no need for us to suppose any such thing. Colonel Venables, a Cromwellian, wrote in favour of sad-coloured fishing clothes, but lively sporting costumes were in vogue, perhaps as a reaction against Puritan sobriety ; and often in early prints and pictures the well-dressed fishermen look simpler than the hunting apparel and liveries, which were likely to be soiled by spills and torn by brambles. For instance, fishing costumes in pictures by Smith of Derby should be compared with the hunting costumes in James Seymour and in John Wootton. Print-buyers have never been so foolish as to collect etchings and engravings that falsified the sporting customs of their own times ; and if most of Walton's illustrators had studied the clothes in Barlow's prints and drawings they would have placed their country life more truthfully out of doors among peasants and sportsmen.

Another matter of interest is brought before us by Barlow's design of "Angling"—the rods that were then in vogue, and how much art entered into their craftsmanship. The gentleman on our left seems to have a rod in four pieces, while the peasant's rod in the foreground on our right is of one piece ; so they remind me of what Thomas Barker wrote in *The Art of Angling*, first published in 1651, two years before *The Compleat Angler*. Barker speaks of a hazel rod of one piece, or of two pieces set together in the most convenient manner, light and gentle. Later we shall see that rods of three pieces were made long before Barker's day, in the fifteenth century, but that the illustration given of them is not "light and gentle." Walton says that "a right-grown top is a choice commodity, and should be preserved

from the water soaking into it, which makes it in wet weather to be heavy and fish ill-favouredly, and not true"; "also it rots quickly for want of painting: and I think a good top is worth preserving, or I had not taken care to keep a top above twenty years." So he sets great store by a painted rod, giving minute instructions to his pupil in Chapter XXI.¹ It is probable that his description of careful workmanship came to him from the old Bowyers and Fletchers, who in the times of military archery painted the great English longbow and its arrows:

"And as for painting your rod, which must be in oil, you must first make a size with glue and water, boiled together until the glue be dissolved, and the size a lye-colour: then strike your size upon the wood with a bristle, or a brush, or pencil, whilst it is hot; that being quite dry, take white-lead, and a little red-lead, and a little coal-black, so much as altogether will make an ash-colour: grind these altogether with linseed-oil; let it be thick, and lay it thin upon the wood with a brush or pencil: this do for the ground of any colour to lie upon wood.

"For a green, take pink and verdigris, and grind them together in linseed oil, as thin as you can well grind it: then lay it smoothly on with your brush, and drive it thin; once doing, for the most part, will serve, if you lay it well; and if twice, be sure your first colour be thoroughly dry before you lay on a second."

What advice could be better?

James Cheetham, whose *Angler's Vade Mecum* dates from 1681, has remarks on rods that are interesting. The butt which he recommends, for instance, is to be made of fir by a fletcher, or arrow-maker; a hazel top, and a whalebone tip: the total length to be 18 ft. As for *The Experienced Angler, or Angling Improved*, by Colonel Venables, here are some extracts about rods which I have chosen from Mr. A. N. Gilbey's first-edition copy:

"*The Time to provide stocks and tops.*

"In autumn, when the leaves are almost or altogether fallen, which is usually about the Winter Soltice, the sap being then in the root. . . .

"About the middle of January the sap beginneth to ascend again, and then the time is past to provide yourself with stocks and tops. You need not be so exactly curious for your stocks as the tops, though I wish you to

¹ This chapter by Walton should be read side by side with the fifteenth-century treatise by Dame Barnes or Bernes, in order that points of resemblance and points of difference may be noted critically. In some respects Walton's teaching is inferior, as in his choice of marigolds instead of weld for a yellow dye. Venables also speaks of marigolds, but believes that overmuch attention can be given to the dyeing of lines. He chooses sorrel, white, and grey; sorrel for muddy and boggy rivers, white and grey for clear waters. If any other tint is worth attention, he gives his vote to pale watery green (pp. 8-9 of his book, first edition).

choose the neatest taper-grown you can for stocks. . . . Let your tops be the most neat rush-grown shoots you can get, straight and smooth ; and . . . for the ground rod, near or full two yards long. . . . If for the fly, of what length you please ; because you must either choose them to fit the stock, or the stock to fit them in a most exact proportion ; neither do they need to be so very much taper-grown as those for the ground, for if your rod be not most exactly proportionable, as well as slender, it will neither cast well, strike readily, nor ply and bend equally, which will very much endanger your line. . . .”

Tops and stocks must be gathered in the same season ; “ and if any of them be crooked, bind them altogether, and they will keep one another straight ; or lay them on some even-boarded floor, with a weight on the crooked parts, or else bind them close to some straight staff or pole ; but before you do this you must bathe [*i.e.* heat] them all, save the very top, in a gentle fire.”¹ Venables also recommends that new rods should be kept for eighteen months, at least, but preferably for two years, before they are used in sport. He says, too :

“ For the ground angle, I prefer the Cane or Reed before all other, both for its length and lightness ; and whereas some object against its colour and stiffness, I answer, both these inconveniences are easily remedied, the colour by covering it with thin leather or Parchment, . . . dyed into what colour you please. Or you may colour the Cane itself, as you see daily done by those that sell them in London, especially if you scrape off the shining yellow outside, but that weakeneth the Rod. The stiffness of the Cane is helped by the length and strength of the top, which I would wish to be very much taper-grown, and of the full length I spoke of before ; and so it will kill a very good fish without ever straining the Cane, which will (as you may observe) yield and bend a little ; neither would I advise any to use a reed that will not receive a top of the forementioned length.

“ Such who most commend the Hazel-rod (which I also value and praise, but for different reasons) above the Cane, do it because, say they, the slender rod saveth the line ; but my opinion is that the equal bending of the rod chiefly (next to the skill of the Angler) saveth the line, and the slenderness I conceive principally serveth to make the fly-rod long and light, easy to be managed with one hand, and casteth the fly far, which are to me the considerations chiefly to be regarded in a fly-rod. For if you observe the slender part of the rod, if strained, shoots forth in length as if it were part of the line, so that the whole stress or strength of the fish is borne, or sustained, by the thicker part of the rod, which is no stronger than the stronger end of such a top as I did before direct for the ground-rod ; and you may prove

¹ Later we shall see that, in the fifteenth century, a hot oven was used for this artificial seasoning.



DEAD FISH IN A LANDSCAPE. *From an Early Oil Painting by FRANCIS BARLOW (c. 1626-C. 1703). The Tyrwhitt Drake Collection. See p. 204.*



COURSING AND ANGLING. *From an Original Drawing by FRANCIS BARLOW (c. 1626-C. 1703). By permission of Frank T. Salton. See p. 204.*

what I say to be true if you hang a weight at the top of the fly-rod, which you shall see ply and bend in the stiff or thick part more or less as the weight is heavy or light.

"Having made this digression for the Cane, I return to the making up of the top, of which at the upper or small end, I would have you cut off about two foot or three quarters of a yard at most, and then piece neatly to the thick remaining part a small shoot of blackthorn or crab-tree (gathered in the season, as before), fitted in a most exact proportion to the strength of the hazel; and then cut off a small part of the slender end of the blackthorn or crab-tree, and lengthen out the same with a small piece of whalebone, made round, smooth and taper; all which will make your rod to be very long, gentle, and not so apt to break or stand bent as the hazel, both which are great inconveniences, especially breaking, which will force you from your sport to amend your top. . . ."

At the end of Venables' book is an advertisement showing that, though the home-made was used by a great many English anglers, London had professional makers of "all manner of fishing tackling"; such as Mr. Brandons, hard by the Swan in Golden Lane, and Mr. Fletchers, near St. Gregory's Church by the west-end of St. Paul's. There was also "a most choice hook-maker," Mr. Kirby, who plied his craft in Harp Alley in Shoe Lane. May we assume that Venables, and other writers, in their detailed directions for home-made things, thought principally of their provincial readers? In any case, Venables wrote with a feeling for artistic handicraft, desiring that fly-rods and ground-rods should be quite fit for their work.

The advertisements differ in some later editions of his book, and in one edition there is no advertisement.

Venables had his book illustrated with ten small engravings of fish, and also with a very useful title-page, which deserves the most careful study. In the reproduction that I give of it on p. 210, note first of all the two rods, and the number of their joints. One has a butt-end shaped like a gun's stock, while the other has a knob at the butt-end; and one seems to have five pieces, including the gun-like butt-end.¹ The tip of each rod has a loop to which the line is attached.

Near these rods is a creel that resembles those of our day. Yet we must not affirm, as a known writer did recently, that "those old fellows Walton, Cotton, Venables, and their foregoers, although they had such spindly, whippy rods and many devices which seem primitive, yet carried their fish home in creels precisely like those into which we put trout now."

¹ Mr. H. T. Sheringham tells me that the gun-like butt-end was used, probably, for winding up the line in fly-fishing.

To write with this downright confidence is to forget Barlow's print of "Angling," the most notable fishing composition designed in Walton's time. The fish-basket here is not in the least like a modern creel, and the truthfulness of its handled shape is confirmed by illustrations in three books, one of which is a booklet so wee that it is fit to be the first birthday present of a good angler's son and heir, or sun and air. It measures only $2\frac{5}{8}$ in. by



$1\frac{3}{4}$ in., and is called *The Young Sportsman's Instructor*, by G. M. Its date is about 1710. The second book is *The True Art of Angling*, 1696, a little thing $2\frac{1}{8}$ in. by $4\frac{3}{8}$ in., written by J. S. (John Smith); and the third, dating from the year 1683, is the third edition of *The Accomplisht Lady's Delight*, whose pages measure $5\frac{3}{4}$ in. by $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. There are twenty-six pages on *New*

and Excellent Experiments and Secrets in the Art of Angling, with a pictorial title-page that is nicely drawn, though the perspective is rather confused. A river flows towards us, seemingly down through hilly meadows. On the left bank, in the middle distance, a lady angler having raised her fish proudly from the water, grasps it firmly by the neck with her left hand, while her right hand holds up her rod almost perpendicularly. The lady's posture is tragical ; she looks ready to quote a few lines from Lady Macbeth. In the foreground on our right, under a tree, a well-dressed angler uses his rod left-handed ; he has flowing hair partly hidden by a wide-brimmed hat with a low crown ; his rod seems to be in one piece ; and he accepts good sport as a custom. Already the tails of five fish protrude from the open and handled basket, while two lie on the ground ; and three of the catch look big enough to upset the basket.

As for G. M.'s illustration, its angler also has flowing hair, and he stands on our right under a tree. The fish-basket is of the same shape, and fish are put into it head-downwards. Beyond the river is a low landscape, and some buildings with two cone-shaped roofs. In John Smith's book a young angler stands on our left under a tree, and raises his catch from the water. His basket is not so tall as the others are, but its form is the same. Beyond the river is a hilly landscape, and another angler, a woman, or a man in a gown.

Venables in his reference to creels, which he calls panniers, says merely :

"Your Pannier cannot be too light : I have seen some made of Oziers, cleft into slender long splinters, and so wrought up ; which is very neat, and exceeding light. You must ever carry with you store of Hooks, Lines, Hair, Silk, Thread, Lead, Links, Corks of all sizes, lest if you lose or break (as is usual) any of them, you be forced to leave your sport, and return for supplies."

III

Barlow does not help us to answer a question that Walton evades, namely, "What were fishing-reels like in the seventeenth century ?" We may assume that if Walton had ever handled a reel he would have described it as he described a great many other things. We are told "that many use to fish for a salmon with a ring of wire on the top of their rod, through which the line may run to as great a length as is needful when he is hooked. And to that end, some use a wheel about the middle of their rod, or near their hand, which is to be observed better by seeing one of them, than by a large

demonstration of words." But a careful drawing of a wheel would have helped Walton here, had he really wished to be graphic.

Andrew Lang complained that another writer of the period, Thomas Barker, was careless towards this subject, illustrating a "winder, or reel, with a totally unintelligible design"; but Barker speaks plainly of the need of "a winder" in fishing for trout and salmon, when "the danger is all in the running out," he says. "You must forecast," he adds, "to turn the fish as you do a wild horse, either upon the right or the left hand, and wind up your line as you find occasion in the guiding of the fish to the shore, having a good large landing hook to take him up."

Again, if Lang had consulted the title-page of Venables' little book, 1662, he would have seen that one writer really tried to do his best for "winders." Here is a genuine pirn, or Scottish reel, but shown in one position only, so that its complete mechanism cannot be studied all round. But enough is shown to prove that the evolution of modern reels began in the time of Walton.

Venables refers to this topic twice under the term "Trowle" or "Trowl"; so I turn to Webster's large Dictionary, and am referred from *trowl* to *troll*. As an intransitive verb, in one of its meanings, to troll is "to fish with a rod whose line runs on a reel." Troll has many meanings that suggest circular movement; as in the rotative disk with spiral ribs, called a troll plate, and in Sir Walter Scott's words, "Troll the brown bowl"—that is, pass it round.

Venables speaks first of a "Trowle" for pike-fishing. "You may buy your Trowle ready made, therefore I shall not trouble myself to describe it, only let it have a winch to wind it up withal." Concerning salmon: "The Salmon taketh the artificial fly very well, but you must use a Trowle, as for the Pike, or he being a strong fish will hazard your line, except you give him length. . . ."

The Colonel gives great care to lines, and several of his instructions contradict a statement made by Andrew Lang about Walton's times, namely: "It will be observed, of course, that hair was then used, and gut is first mentioned for angling purposes by Mr. Pepys." Now, Venables published his book when Pepys was thirty, choosing Walton's publisher, Marriott; and on pp. 7 and 8 we read what is said about various lines:

" . . . If one hair be long and another short, the short one receiveth no strength from the long one, and so breaketh, and then the other (as too weak) breaketh also. Therefore you must twist them slowly, and in the

twisting, keep them from entangling together, which hindereth their right plaiting or bedding. Also I do not like the mixing of silk or thread with hair ; but if you please, you may, to make the line strong, make it all of Silk, or Thread, or Hair, as strong as you please ; and the lowest part of the smallest Lute or Viol strings, which I have proved to be very strong. . . . They will quickly rot in the water ; but you may help that in having new and strong to change the rotted ones. . . ."

It is clear from this that the tradition of hair lines inherited from mediæval anglers did not prevent experiments in Walton's times ; and as for lute and viol strings, they were made of catgut, or lamb gut, so Venables must be placed side by side with Pepys. Silkworm gut is first mentioned by James Saunders' *Compleat Fisherman*, 1724.

In angling with a natural minnow for trout : " You must," he says, " have a Swivel or Turn, placed about a yard or more from your hook," and " you must continually draw your bait up the stream near the top of your water. . . . You may . . . imitate the minnow as well as the fly, but it must be done by an Artist with the Needle." When you go minnow-fishing for pike with a winched " trowle," at least two yards of your line next the hook should be of silk, and the rest of strong shoemaker's thread, your hook double, and strongly armed with wire for about a foot ; then with a probe or needle you must draw the wire in at the fish's mouth and out at the tail, that so the hook may lie in the mouth of the fish, and both the points on either side. " Upon the shank of the hook fasten some lead very smooth, that it go into the fish's [the live bait's] mouth and sink her with the head downwards, as though she had been playing on the top of the water, and were returning to the bottom. Your bait may be small roach, dace, gudgeon, loach, or a frog sometimes. . . ." ¹

IV

From Colonel Venables let us turn to another interesting figure, the tough salmon-fisher Captain Richard Franck, also a Roundhead soldier, who served with Cromwell in Scotland. To the north he returned and fished with a soldier's pluck from the Esk to Strathnaver. It is easy to imagine what his experiences must have been among the fleas, lice, and other searching miseries. He speaks of the cooking as Scottish sluttery, and his companion, Theophilus, exclaims :

" Oh, I'm almost worried to death with lice, my skin is all mottled and dappled

¹ Venables, pp. 45-46.

like an April trout. Can you blame me to relinquish this lousy lodging, when my battered sides are pinched full of iletholes? One brigade pursues another, and flight I find the best expedient; for my enemies, I perceive, are so desperately resolved that they'll rather die than quit the field. . . ."

There's no resemblance at all between Captain Franck's chosen lot as a fisherman and the meditative comfort which Walton loves, with lavender-scented sheets in a romantic inn, and beautiful verses resting like nosegays of spring flowers here and there in Piscator's gadabout chapters. How can we reasonably suppose that two such different anglers should understand each other?

Franck accepts hardships quietly, as though angling is a campaign, and he loves the Scottish scenery. As a landscapist he is often more definite than Walton; and his experiences being wider and fuller of adventure, he feels the need of more adjectives, and finds that they are difficult to choose aptly. Far too many of his reflections are not only dull, they should be deleted by a kind editor; and he carries too much pedantry in his literary baggage. But yet he is a character to be liked, and Scotsmen should note his admiration for Glasgow.

As a writer on angling he has had, and he still makes, many foes, mainly because he finds fault with Izaak Walton; but let us look upon him as a Shakespearian Holofernes of the rod and line, and let us allow him to be frank in speech as well as in surname. Besides, he has a perfect right in the history of his times to pick bones with Walton—as much right as Sir A. Quiller-Couch has to pick holes in Shakespeare, for instance. "If we could rid ourselves of cant," says Sir Arthur, "we should admit that Shakespeare's 'wit' is usually cheap, not seldom exasperating, and at times merely disgusting." Franck certainly rids himself of cant in his attitude towards Walton, so it is entertaining to see what he says and how he says it. His critics, as a rule, neither try to understand him as a man, nor give his criticisms in full.¹ And they find no fun in his Holofernes words and phrases.

Captain Franck hates the apologetic tone in which writers of his time usually introduce their work to the public; so he reacts from it into self-praise; and this idea has been taken up with humour in the preface of a recent book, written by Mr. William Caine.² Franck, of course, being a Cromwellian, is in deadly earnest even in his self-approval. On p. xxx he congratulates himself that he does not borrow other men's labours to adorn

¹ I am studying Franck's *Northern Memoirs* from a copy of Sir Walter Scott's edition (1821).

² *The Angler at Large*, a very jolly book.

his discoveries, but is content to be pleased with "the great and stupendous volume of the creation." He has Walton in mind when he says, on p. xxxi :

"He that licks up the fabulous fiction of slippery authority, to confirm his false and untenable position, brings unsound arguments to prop and support the slender faith his opinion leans on : whereby he exposes himself to clamour and reproach, and the censure of every judicious examinant."

Later, on p. xxxvii, after saying that it is not his business to describe how fishing tackle is made, he adds :

"For that end you may dedicate your opinion to what scribbling putationer you please ; *The Compleat Angler*, if you will, who tells you of a tedious fly story, extravagantly collected from antiquated authors, such as Gesner, Dubravius, etc., but I rather commend you to famous Isaac Owldham, whose experiences sprung from the Academy of Trent : so did that eminent angler, George Merril ; and as eminent as he was John Faulkner, whose known abilities to cultivate this science (both for directions and manuals) I modestly prefer before any other. . . ." ¹

On p. xxxix he girds against "the mouldy records of Androvanus, Dubravius, Gesner, or Isaac Walton" ² ; so we begin to rejoice that this downright critic's book, though written in 1658, was not published till 1694, and thus after Walton's death.

Franck complains of Walton's remarks on baits (p. 58).

"To furnish every angler with a new bait," he says, "was the studious invention of Isaac Walton, author (as you may read) of *The Compleat Angler*, who industriously has taken care to provide a good cook (supposing his wife had a finger in the pie), which will necessarily be wanting in our northern expedition, where the fry are numerous (nay numberless almost), in some of those rapid and trembling streams ; from whence the artificial fly (if that exercise be well understood) will contribute as much as anything to court them ashore, and sweeten our recreation. . . ."

In the *Northern Memoirs* Franck appears as Arnoldus, and he is accompanied by a pupil named Theophilus. On p. 175 Arnoldus says that :

"the frequent exercise of fly-fishing, though painful, yet it's delightful, more especially when managed by the methods of art, and the practical rules and mediums of artists. But the ground-bait was of old the general practice, and beyond dispute brought considerable profit ; which happened in those days when the curiosity of fly-fishing was intricate and unpracticable.

¹ Note the word "manuals." Were MS. handbooks written here and there for anglers in provincial towns ? We may assume that mediæval monasteries compiled such handbooks.

² Franck changed Walton's Christian name from Izaak to Isaac.

However, Isaac Walton (late author of *The Compleat Angler*) has imposed upon the world this monthly novelty, which he understood not himself; but stuffs his book with morals from Dubravius and others, not giving us one precedent of his own practical experiments, except otherwise where he prefers the trencher before the trolling-rod; who lays the stress of his arguments upon other men's observations, wherewith he stuffs his indigested octavo; so brings himself under the angler's censure, and the common calamity of a plagiarist, to be pitied (poor man) for his loss of time, in scribbling and transcribing other men's notions. These are the drones that rob the hive, yet flatter the bees they bring them honey.

"*Theophilus*. I remember the book, but you inculcate his *erratas*; however, it may pass muster among common muddlers.

"*Arnoldus*. No, I think not; for I remember in Stafford I urged his own argument upon him, that pickerel weed of itself breeds pickerel [pike]. Which question was no sooner stated, but he transmits himself to his authority, viz. Gesner, Dubravius, and Androvanus. Which I readily opposed, and offered my reasons to prove the contrary; asserting that pickerels have been fished out of pools and ponds where that weed (for ought I knew) never grew since the nonage of time, nor pickerel ever known to have shed their spawn there. This I propounded from a rational conjecture of the heronshaw, who to commode herself with the fry of fish, because in a great measure part of her maintenance, probably might lap some spawn about her legs, in regard adhering to the segs and bull-rushes, near the shallows, where the fish shed their spawn, as myself and others without curiosity have observed. And this slimy substance adhering to her legs, etc., and she mounting the air for another station, in probability mounts with her. Where note, the next pond she happily arrives at, possibly she may leave the spawn behind her, which my *Compleat Angler* no sooner deliberated, but drop'd his argument, and leaves Gesner to defend it; so huffed away: which rendered him rather a formal opinionist, than a reformed and practical artist, because to celebrate such antiquated records, whereby to maintain such an improbable assertion.

"*Theophilus*. This was to the point, I confess; pray go on.

"*Arnoldus*. In his book, intituled *The Compleat Angler*, you may read there of various and diversified colours, as also the forms and proportions of flies. Where, poor man, he perplexes himself to rally and scrape together such a parcel of fragments, which he fancies arguments convincing enough to instruct the adult and minority of youth, into the slender margin of his uncultivated art, never made practicable by himself, I'm convinced. Where note, the true character of an industrious angler, more deservedly falls upon Merrill and Faulkner, or rather upon Isaac Owldham, a man that fished salmon but with three hairs at hook, whose collections and experiments were lost with himself.

"*Theophilus*. That was a pity.

"*Arnoldus*. So it was. . . ."

Walton was certainly defeated in the contest at Stafford, and the disputants may have lost their tempers. There is a tone of wounded pride in Franck's attitude towards Walton. We cannot accuse the Captain of jealousy, since he greatly admires three rival fly-fishers, Merrill, Faulkner, and Owldham. There are three later references to *The Compleat Angler*, one concerning barbel (p. 325), another concerning "the unthinking rabble of his (Gesner's) ridiculous proselytes," and the third in some lines of verse about bleak (p. 347). The passage about barbel is an example of Franck's idea of humour :

" . . . Isaac Walton has provided a cook, that, in his opinion, can dress him (the barbel) well enough, whose arguments beyond dispute had indubitably miscarried, had not his wife had a finger in the pie. Thus he, and some others, dress fish before they catch them ; but I approve it requisite to catch them first, and then at your leisure dress them afterwards."

There is no other contemporary criticism of Walton, apart from that of a few friends, like Cotton ; and it is all the more interesting because its candour has done no harm at all to *The Compleat Angler*. Walton himself never read it, and there's no need for us to be shocked. Even Franck's tone, which jars on many Waltonians, is a very mild form of censure compared with that of the Puritan moralists, notably Prynne, whose virtue is a sort of Etna of Ethics. To my mind an offence against Walton that does matter is found on the large black marble slab that records where he rests, for the Christian name is put " Isaac," as though Walton's liking for " Izaak " died with him and was buried.



From "*The Compleat Angler*," p. 106.

CHAPTER X

WALTON AS AN ARTIST IN LANGUAGE

*B*ut yet, though while I fish I fear,
I make good fortune my
 repart;
And thereunto my friend invite,
In whom I more than that
 delight;

Who is more welcome to
 my dish
Than to my angle was
 my fish.

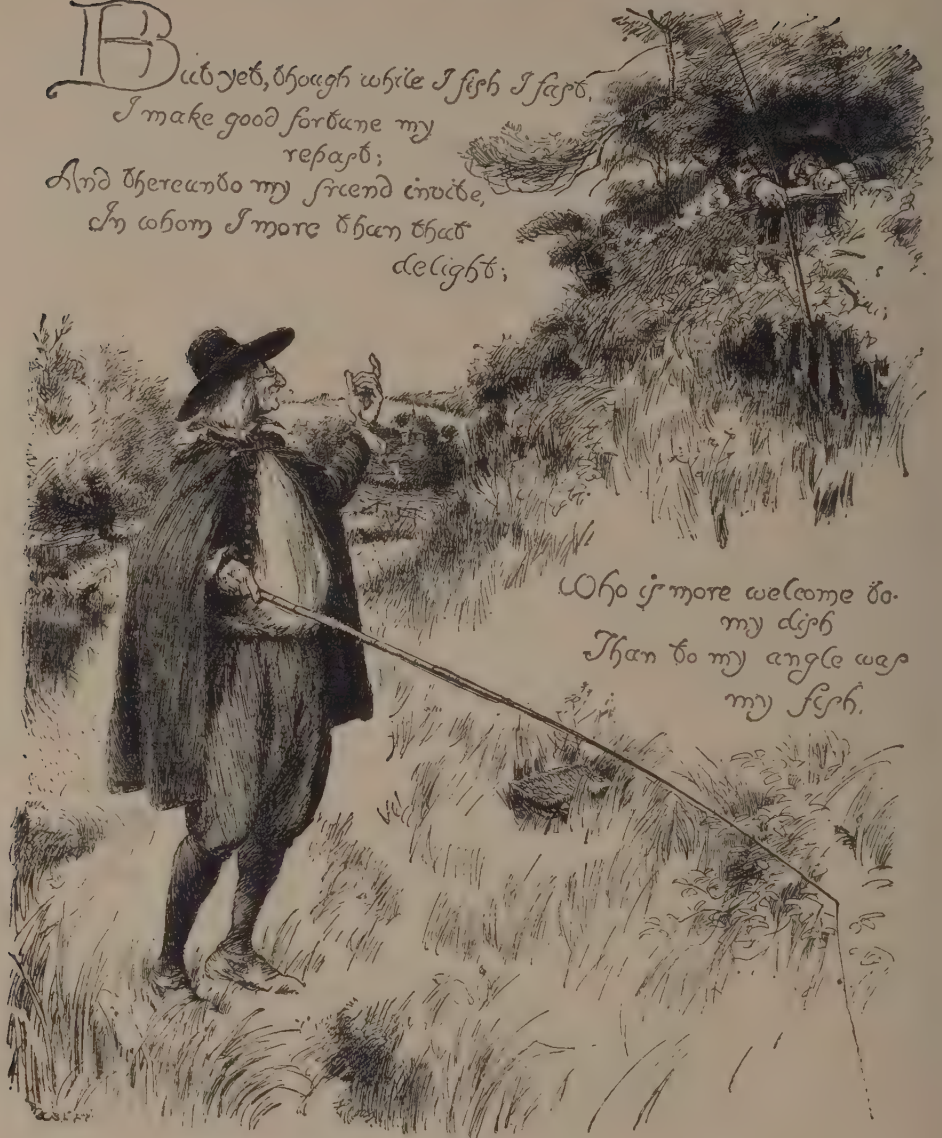


ILLUSTRATION TO WALTON'S "ANGLER'S SONG."

Drawn for Sir Frederick Macmillan by the late HUGH THOMSON.



By hand alone my
work can do !

So I can fish and
study too.

ILLUSTRATION TO WALTON'S "ANGLER'S SONG."

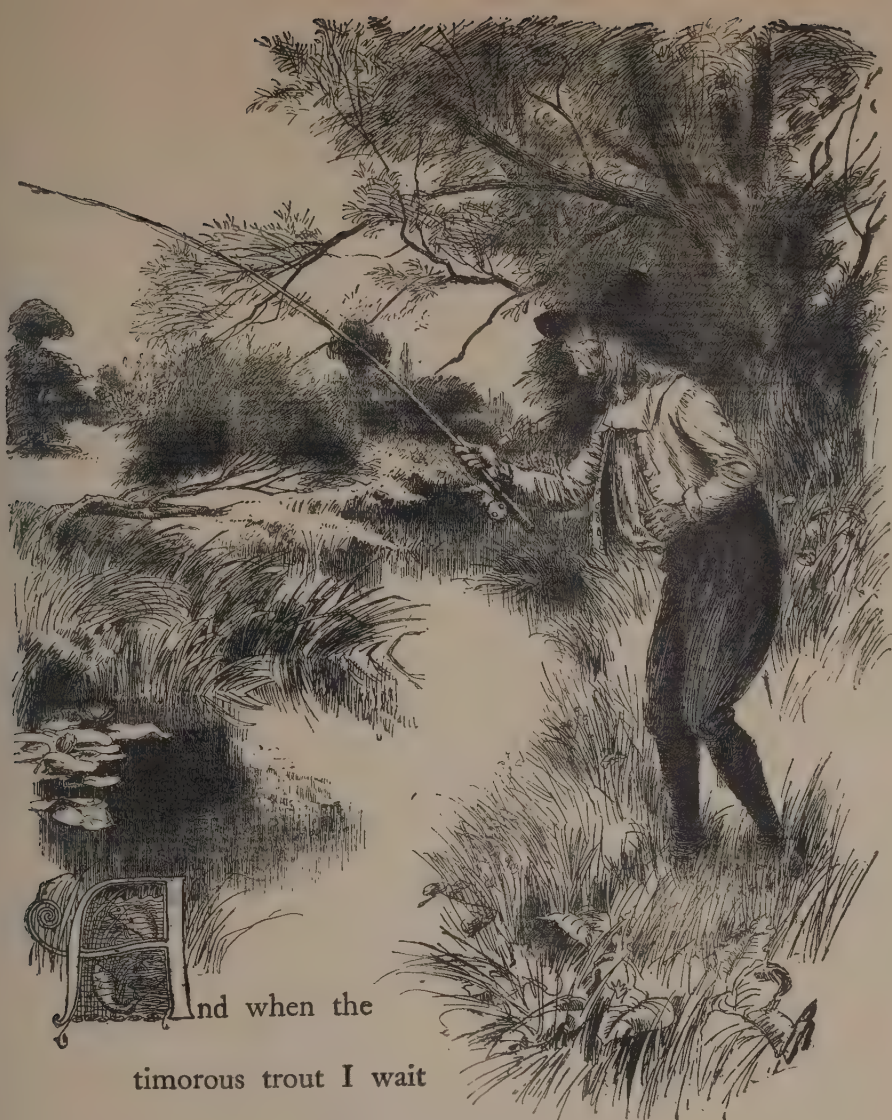
Drawn for Sir Frederick Macmillan by the late HUGH THOMSON.

I

His love of angling is to be judged, not by what he says in praise of its charm, but by the joy he feels from page to page as he composes a book of varied art in the service of his riverside recreation. What are the qualities of art in his composition? Does Walton invite us to see what he sees? Is he a realist attracted by the changing aspects of coloured things out of doors when sunshine and shadow play upon them, and pattern them into pictures that alter incessantly? During the composition of his paragraphs and pages, does he think imaginatively, and, therefore, under a form of visual conception? When he speaks in praise of my hostess of the inn, for example, does his memory *see* the good, trim woman clearly, and note again those kind and busy hands that put lavender among the neatly folded sheets in the linen-cupboard? Many writers call up into pictorial presence before their minds episodes of life, and landscapes that they love, then strive to find words with which to describe what their minds have done. Others do sketches in words out of doors, trying to find phrases in which to suggest how different birds look, fly, and make sounds; how one species of tree in its growth and foliage differs from another; how colours in flowers are influenced by changing light; and whether the varying magic of water, as protean as the sky in rainy countries, can be brought within the limits of literary craftsmanship. Is Walton to be placed among either of these sets of composing writers? No doubt he has a love of the country so deep and so attractive that many painters and draughtsmen have been proud to serve him as illustrators. But is this love graphically expressed, or has it a peculiar vagueness which somehow keeps us in the open air?

In this chapter let us try to examine frankly the qualities of Walton's art in language. They come to us, most of them, let us note first of all, from and with the last of the Elizabethans. That is to say, Walton inherits gladly and with pride a good many qualities from the genius of the Renaissance. Now in England this genius in its productions expresses itself mainly in words, and particularly in dramatic poetry, while abroad, in France, Flanders, Italy, and Spain, its principal agents are mostly great painters, who devote a large portion of their time to Scriptural subjects. Even Dante, who gives to his poetry her home in a terrible other-worldliness, is a great Italian painter in musical words, his conceptions being minutely pictorial, like the paintings of his renewing period.

Is it not wonderful that little England, with her reputation for tongue-



And when the
timorous trout I wait

To take, and he devours my bait,

How poor a thing, sometimes I find,

Will captivate a greedy mind;

And when none bite, I praise the wise,

Whom vain allurements ne'er surprise.

ILLUSTRATION TO WALTON'S "ANGLER'S SONG."

Drawn for Sir Frederick Macmillan by the late HUGH THOMSON.

tied tenacity, and her Elizabethan population of two and half millions, should achieve her Renaissance mainly by the handling of words, while the vivacious and voluble Italians and French turn to the silent arts, painting, sculpture, mosaic, jewellery, carving, which they unite to architecture ?

II

Walton is twenty-three in the year of Shakespeare's death, and forty-four when rare Ben Jonson dies. Jonson we know as an angler, and he and Walton are acquaintances. Quite possibly, as Mr. R. B. Marston has suggested, Walton has fished with Ben Jonson, as with Sir Henry Wotton and Sir George Hastings. Possibly also they have "talked of Shakespeare, and of the question whether he or Marlowe wrote the 'Milkmaid's Song' quoted so charmingly by Walton." Let us assume, too, that Ben Jonson may tell Walton what he has told Drummond of Hawthornden, that he has it in mind to write a piscatory play, the scene to be Loch Lomond.¹ Unfortunately, this proves to be one of those literary projects that begin and end in day-dreams.

Though Walton's everyday work in London as a tradesman—a haberdasher or an ironmonger—cannot "set his genius," yet fortune in the main is his friend ; and, though a man of peace to whom the strife in life and in art is repellent, he remains always an Elizabethan in his management of words. In one respect he is pre-Elizabethan, for nature has fitted him to be the Bishop Latimer of the seventeenth century, as fond of country life as of moralising. But his lot as a tradesman holds him firmly, so the Bishop in his genius makes friendships with divines, and writes about some of them, and stores *The Compleat Angler* with moral reflections which become too numerous in the fifth edition.

If Walton would let himself go, he would be as truly dramatic as Bunyan, his contemporary, loves to be. But he takes delight in authority, choosing the Anglican bishops as security for his creed ; also he fears that hostility between the Puritans and the petticoat-loving courtiers, which begins to be active even in Elizabeth's reign. Mirth might seem scurrilous to the Puritans even when it is put aside as tame and poor by the Royalists.

¹ Mr. Hugh T. Sheringham came upon this entertaining fact in Gifford's life prefixed to Chatto and Windus's edition of *Ben Jonson*, 3 vols., p. xlii. A sort of piscatorial play has been written, and also acted in London. Its title is *Izaak Walton, a Drama*, its author, Charles Dance, and its first performance, Monday, April 1st, 1839. William Farren played Walton, and Madame Vestris appeared as a ward of Walton's, disguised as Maudlin.

Remember, Walton's *Angler* is brought out in the Commonwealth's fourth year.

Note, for example, in his address to all readers, how he refers to the mirth which he has put into *The Compleat Angler*: . . . "I have in several places mixed (not any scurrility, but) some innocent, harmless mirth, of which, if thou be a severe, sour-complexioned man, then I here disallow thee to be a competent judge; for divines say, there are offences given, and offences not given, but taken." What a glimpse we get in these few lines of the good man's dread of moral reproach! Why is he anxious about his gentle and endearing mirth, instead of remembering some touches of cruelty in his remarks on the use of live bait in fishing?

Bunyan is wonderfully different. Though a greater humorist by far than Walton, he inherits broodingly the whole turmoil of religious strife which the Reformation let loose, and he feels the spiritual drama of man's life as intimately as Shakespeare reveals the character of Hamlet. Authority is nothing to him, and in his desire to be saved his genius at times skirts insanity. *The Pilgrim's Progress* we may regard as the Hamlet of religious fervour beset with doubts and tormenting fears. And I believe that no person can really appreciate *The Compleat Angler* unless he keeps before his mind its great antithesis, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Only by so doing can he appreciate the limits of these writers as artists. As the late Andrew Lang said:

"Christian bows beneath a burden of sin; Piscator beneath a basket of trout. Let us be grateful for the diversities of human nature, and the dissimilar paths which lead Piscator and Christian alike to the City not built with hands. . . ."

Note also that Walton is inferior to Bunyan in the realization of character and of dramatic action. Yet he tries to give to *The Compleat Angler* a dialogue form, so he invites such criticism as dramatists receive. Consequently, when the dialogue becomes a monologue on angling, or runs into a brief sermon, or talks like an encyclopædia, Walton has lost grip of his chosen method. Some of his talk about live baits ought really to come from another person, not from Piscator; who is Walton himself. These matters receive little attention from Walton's editors. Let me suggest that *The Compleat Angler* should be published with the text of its first edition on the left-hand page, and, on the opposite page, Walton's "enlargements" in later editions, particularly in the fifth one. If this were done his readers would be able to see how his mind weakens between 1653 and 1676. Yet it is the fifth edition

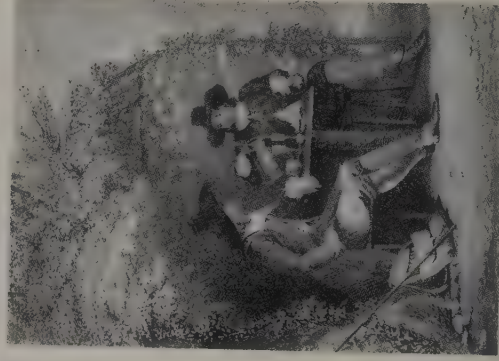
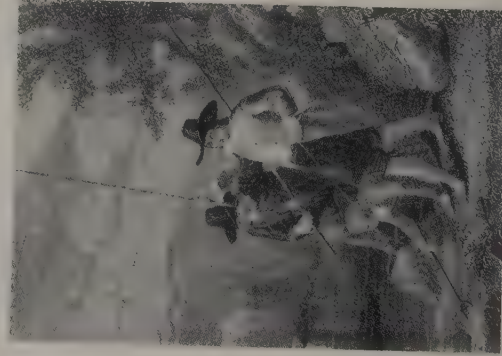
that is generally treasured by editors, not always without regret. To see Walton's art at its best we should be most friendly with the earlier editions, one may venture to think.

Another of Walton's traits as an artist is reaction against opposition. His reference to the possibility of pickerel-weed begetting pike, which rests on the poor authority of Gesner, as we have seen, brings him into a dispute with Richard Franck; yet we find it in the fifth edition.¹ Again, several students have said, like the late Andrew Lang, that Walton scarcely speaks a true word about the habits of salmon, except by accident. And yet, in the meeting at Stafford with Franck, he might easily have placated the salmon-fisher by asking him to talk about his experiences in both England and Scotland, and Franck's first-hand evidence, skilfully cross-examined by Walton's curiosity, then passed through the alembic of Walton's genius, would have become a great new chapter in the fifth edition! There are limits to Walton's research that are very perplexing. His attitude towards artificial flies changes after the publication in 1662 of Colonel Venables' book, which he praises warmly in a commendatory letter. He does not alter his praise of the jury of flies, "likely to betray and condemn all the trouts in the river," but he warns his readers against it in the penultimate paragraph of his preface to the fifth edition.

For this preface, or address "to all Readers," "but especially to the honest Angler," we can gather a few facts more about his creed as a literary artist, though a tone of apology sounds too frequently in the paragraphs. One present-day view of a writer's craft is not only that it should satisfy the writer himself, but also that the writer should never stoop to conquer a purchasing public. But this view is plainly excessive, because art is as an essential of human life, and life in all of its forms adapts itself to changing conditions in order that it may go on living reproductively. Moreover, art is always a collaboration between those who produce it and those who appreciate the work done well for definite purposes. Thus a novel is meant to be read by readers of novels, and a book on country life by those who take delight in things rustic and rural.

Walton is no believer in art for art's own sake alone. In writing his

¹ " 'Tis not to be doubted, but that they are bred, some by generation, and some not; as, namely, of a weed called pickerel-weed, unless learned Gesner be much mistaken, for he says, this weed and other glutinous matter, with the help of the sun's heat in some particular months, and some ponds apted for it by Nature, do become Pikes. But, doubtless, divers Pikes are bred after this manner, or are brought into some ponds some such other ways as is past man's finding out, of which we have daily testimonies. . . . "



EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS TO "THE COMPLEAT ANGLER,"
1844. *Designed by JOHN ABSOLON, R.I. (1815-1896). Engraved by*
J. T. WILLMORE, A.R.A.

masterpiece he makes a recreation of a recreation, which is one of the best ways of earning friendliness from grateful readers ; and he " cannot doubt but that most readers may receive so much pleasure or profit by it [his book], as may make it worthy the time of their perusal, if they be not too grave or too busy men." How considerate he is towards every one who is invited to pay eighteenpence for a little book that has centuries of enjoyable art and life in its chatty, charming pages !

He thinks also of the six little illustrations which he has chosen, but, somehow, forgets to say who drew and engraved them. Pierre Lombart has been named as the engraver, but this conjecture has remained unconfirmed. The second edition has ten small engraved plates in the text. Walton says :

" And next let me add this, that he that likes not the book, should like the excellent pictures of the Trout, and some of the other fish ; which I may take a liberty to commend, because they concern not myself." ¹ Clearly, he is not pleased with *all* of the drawings.

In one important respect Walton's estimate of his own work has not been confirmed by time and its generations of readers. The more useful part of his Discourse—note his choice of the word Discourse—he regards as his " observations of the nature, and breeding, and seasons, and catching of fish " ; while most of his readers prefer that rich art of digression which has made Walton the Montaigne of English pastoralism, mingled with choice verses and moral reflection. Turn over his pages rapidly, and note the frequent use he makes of verses, nearly all of which are borrowed with beautiful judgment, and placed with the care of a fine mosaic-worker. Even when his transitions into verse from fishing lore or angling technique are sharp and sudden, a critic finds on examination that the dodging from one thing to another, and another not always associated with it, is done with a brevity in which careful tact is often revealed, apart from some of the enlargements in the fifth edition.²

Is Walton quite serious when he speaks of the angling part of his book as the more useful ?

He says that angling, like fencing, is taught by practice, not by words,

¹ The illustrations vary in quality of impression. They are clear and good in Mr. A. N. Gilbey's first-edition copy, which has its original binding. Recently, in Mr. Robson's shop, I had the privilege of seeing a copy of the first edition in which the cuts are uncommonly well-printed and preserved.

² Why he does not give more care to the division of his book into the five days remains a mystery. In one line Coridon says good-night, and in the next Piscator says good-morning to Coridon and Peter.

and his digressions from angling prove that his mind is both too Anglican and too poetical to be satisfied with sport alone ; he distrusts angling as a subject for a whole book. Like most Englishmen, too, he cares little for logic, ratiocination, and surprises us by saying that " as no man is born an artist, so no man is born an angler " ; though he, the last of the Elizabethans, is a great example of those inborn gifts without which no craft dependent on rightly co-ordinated work between the eyes and the mind and the hands can ever be carried into abiding workmanship.

He makes this statement only because he wants to impress us with a truism, namely, that books enable us to collect useful knowledge about the crafts we follow, though they cannot help us much in the practice of these crafts, except by warning us against certain things.

III

From this matter let us move on to another that is very delicate. Art has two very different sets of qualities. One set lies on the surface, and is often a reaction from the other set, which represents the innermost working of an artist's temperament and character. Thus, to take an example, Thackeray in his lifetime was regarded, by most readers, as a cynic, yet he was a man with a heart so tender that it caused him intense suffering. His art as a writer is mainly a reaction against this extreme sensitiveness. Now there are writers who believe that Walton's innermost character was not at all stern, but serene and gentle, though this view is at variance with Jacob Huysman's portrait, which reveals a spiritual self-discipline produced by much stern conflict in meditation. The broad and strong chin has pugnacity in it, such as we find in the chins of a good many prelates. When Walton tells us that he writes not for money but for pleasure, making a recreation of a recreation, he means, surely, that he does not permit his private meditations to interfere with his purpose—to please others rather than to please himself. Even so he adds : . . . " having been too easily drawn to do all to please others, as I proposed not the gaining of credit by this undertaking, so I would not willingly lose any part of that to which I had a just title before I begin it ; and do therefore desire and hope, if I deserve not commendation, yet I may obtain pardon." Pardon for what ? Is the general brightness of *The Compleat Angler* a reaction from the anxious meditations of Walton's private hours ?

Charles Lamb asks us to feel only the idealism in Walton, while Leigh

Hunt expects us to see little more than a sternness which, in a customary use of live baits, is certainly cruel. Washington Irving, in his delightful essay on *The Angler*, not only helps Lamb and Scott and Wordsworth to canonize Walton; he catches a good deal of the master's charm, drawing a memorable portrait of a veteran rodsman whom he finds on the banks of a stream in North Wales; an old angler with a wooden leg, and carefully patched clothes, and two rustic disciples, who listen to his talk with infinite deference. Around this veteran and his home Irving throws a very pleasant glamour of poetry, partly for Walton's sake, and partly because Irving's esteem for anglers "has been increased" by reading "an old *Treatise of Fishing with an Angle*, in which are set forth many of the maxims of their inoffensive fraternity." Yet angling is often too manly a sport to be idealised very much. Walton took up this fashion from a lady of the fifteenth century, who hid many rough facts about her beloved pastime in order that she might write of it here and there as an employment at once industrious and devout.

This idealism is delightful in a woman, but it narrows a man's art as a writer on sport, raising questions of truth-telling, which should not be set aside by students of a venerated classic. Let me give two examples of realism in angling experience, one written by a British soldier of to-day, who has seen much terrible warfare; the other written by a soldier of Walton's own time, Colonel Venables, who served under Cromwell, as we have seen. In May of the present year a famous General fished for a few days in Hampshire, and found it "terrible hard and exhausting work, and no results! The weather was all against it, cold and windy!" The Cromwellian soldier, in the 99th page of his epitome of Angling, first edition, tells us why he is opposed to upstream casting in great rivers. "You must wade," he says, adding: "I have known some who thereby got the *Sciatica*, and I would not wish you to purchase pleasure at so dear a rate. . . ." Now, this picture of limping anglers, crippled by sciatica, is worth a great deal of idealism, particularly if we see the waders dressed in the Puritan costumes recommended by Colonel Venables—"sad dark colours, as sad grays, tawny, purple hair or musk colour" (p. 95 of his book). Suppose Walton had sketched a series of episodes in which, after a thorough drenching with rain, and a bad walk through thunder and lightning to his inn, he lingered peevishly through an illness nursed by his hostess, and annoyed by consoling homilies from his pupil Venator. What then? Would he not have added some humorous touches of realistic art which would have done justice to the non-ideal side of angling?

Altogether, one may suggest humbly that the touches of complete realism in his book, instead of being attractive always, clash sometimes too much with the idealism, and with the author's religious reflections. Even Washington Irving, much as he loves Walton, says : "There is certainly something



BAITING THE LEDGER-HOOK WITH A LIVE FROG.

"Use him as though you loved him."

Drawn by E. J. SULLIVAN, 1895, for J. M. Dent & Co.'s edition of "The Compleat Angler," edited by Andrew Lang.

in angling, if we could forget, which anglers are apt to do, the cruelties and tortures inflicted on worms and insects, that tends to produce a gentleness of spirit, and a pure serenity of mind." And Andrew Lang writes of

Walton: "In describing the use of frogs as bait, he makes the famous, or infamous, remark, 'Use him as though you loved him . . . that he may live the longer.' A bait-fisher *may* be a good man, as Izaak was, but it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle . . ."

As Walton, according to his friend Cotton, is to be regarded as the best angler of his time with a natural minnow, it is invariably his attitude towards live baits that stands out in his book as at variance with what Charles Lamb calls "the very spirit of innocence, purity, and simplicity of heart," which "would Christianize every discordant angry passion." For all that, Walton tells us candidly how use and wont enable him to treat living bait, and his book being a picture of his own disposition, in all of his angling habits, and moods of thought and feeling, let us be as frank towards him as he is towards himself. He is a great Englishman, not a saint. To love him as such is a privilege; to enshrine him is to take him away from his beloved rivers.

IV

We turn next to those aspects of art in which this master of Elizabethan English keeps us in the country air. How does he obtain his effects? What use does he make of words and phrases that suggest open-air effects of colour and form? Does he ever feel as a painter does when cloud shadows pattern the running surface of a river, or when gardens and orchards in springtime have their fruit trees clustered with pink-and-white blossoms, that attract many busy and gleaming bullfinches? Is he a thorough lover of the country who writes of his own feelings, like Wordsworth, or does he wish us to see in his art of words what he sees and loves out of doors?

As a rule, writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries care little for the visible aspects of things, so that words suggest to them only a few visible aspects among which to select when a description comes into their work. As Vernon Lee has said,¹ to them a hill is a hill, not a rounded hill or a peaky hill, etc., etc.; so they think it quite enough to say hill, or at most to gird it as a *horrid* hill, because they lose their breath when they try to reach its top. Modes and moods of landscape-gardening come later into literature. In Walton's time, and long afterwards, they are met with only here and there, in small plots of description.

Though the opening chapter of *The Compleat Angler* keeps us in the open air with three sportsmen, an angler, a falconer, and a hunter, we learn nothing

¹ *The Handling of Words*, by Vernon Lee (London, John Lane), p. 50.

about the aspects of the country through which they pass on foot, talking little essays with a care and skill which must slacken their speed to a couple of miles an hour, or less. Each in turn says enough in a flight of history to justify an occasional rest on a bankside, or another morning draught at other places besides the Thatched House in Hoddesden. Are we to believe, for instance, that Piscator is able to walk through some ten pages of uninterrupted monologue, that culminates in a poem of six verses, with eight lines in each verse? There is a perfectly trained gift of elocution in this feat of talk; it invites our wondering admiration. Piscator and Venator certainly need "a civil cup."

In this chapter the atmosphere of the country is made real to us—not by the speeches, but—by a few words that detach themselves vividly around two bits of realism—the coming otter-hunt, and Piscator's detestation of otters.

"I hate them perfectly," he says, "because they love fish so well, or rather, because they destroy so much; indeed so much, that in my judgement all men that keep Otter-dogs ought to have pensions from the King, to encourage them to destroy the very breed of those base Otters, they do so much mischief."

"*Venator*. But what say you to the Foxes of the Nation, would not you as willingly have them destroyed? for doubtless they do as much mischief as Otters do."

"*Piscator*. Oh, Sir, if they do, it is not so much to me and my fraternity, as those base vermin the Otters do."

These are touches of life and of Walton's complex nature that keep the first chapter from seeming like quotations from a seventeenth-century encyclopædia. Several of the monologues are longer than a good many of Bacon's alembicated essays.

Next day, at the otter-hunt, there are touches that contrast powerfully, like silver and black. On Amwell Hill, just when the sun is rising, Venator says to Piscator: . . . "Look down at the bottom of the hill there, in that meadow, chequered with water-lilies and lady-smocks; there you may see what work they make; look! look! you may see all busy, men and dogs, dogs and men, all busy."

There is no mist in the May-time valley, else that pretty, dappled meadow could not be seen from the hill-top. Piscator is eager to join the sportsmen. "No reasonable hedge or ditch shall hold me," he declares. Yet all at once the movement of the scene is delayed by the huntsman himself, who,

in answer to an absurd question from Piscator, as to whether the hunted animal is a beast or a fish, becomes an encyclopædist with a liking for Gesner and "our learned Camden." In other words, he is Walton in a teaching mood. Still, the otter is killed, and being a bitch that has lately whelped, they go to the place where she kennelled, and kill the young ones. At first Piscator begs that he may have one of them alive, that he may try to imitate a gentleman in Leicestershire, who has tamed and trained a young otter. His request is granted, but Piscator changes his mind seemingly, for we don't know what he does with the small creature. Indeed, a few moments later he says : " God keep you all, gentlemen ; and send you meet this day with another Bitch-otter, and kill her merrily, and all her young ones too." He adds : " I am glad these otters were killed, and I am sorry there are no more Otter-killers. . . ." There's no stint of Walton's hatred of these rival fishers, these anglers with webbed toes and four paddling legs. Are we to suppose that pious divines, like Nowel and Donne, would have shown the same feeling towards a litter of otters ?

To my mind the realism is by far too strong for Walton's keynotes of idealism and vagrant chattiness.

Passing now from details to general views, simple as Walton seems to be in his finer passages, he is then most careful as an artist in language, to whom revision is a joy, like trying new music through several variations, in the hope that one of them will have a deeper rhythm and a finer tone than the rest. Chapters IV and V are wonderful as an epitome of Walton's art and ingenuous manhood. No writer but Walton could have made such a fascinating medley of beautiful verses with information about a host of things and persons : flies, worms, caterpillars, otters, fish, and fishing ; Sir Walter Raleigh, Kit Marlowe, Queen Elizabeth, Sir Thomas Overbury, Casaubon, Maudlin, Peter, Coridon, Mr. William Basse, John Chalkhill, and Du Bartas ; the torture of minnows, old and ancient superstitions, Mr. Thomas Barker, a gang of gipsies, and another gang of beggars ; Sir Francis Bacon, and the holy Mr. Herbert, whose poem helps Walton to find a close affinity between the duty of thanking God for pleasant meadows, with sweet flowers, and the later act of trying to hook another brace of trout. Walton keeps his own atmosphere so perfectly that his wisdom and his child-like faith in fantastic conjectures are united almost magically. With the same candour we are told that laying night-hooks, which Colonel Venables condemns, is like putting money to use, while catching trout in the night by the light of a torch or straw, is unpleasant. Many learned men, we read, like many country-people,

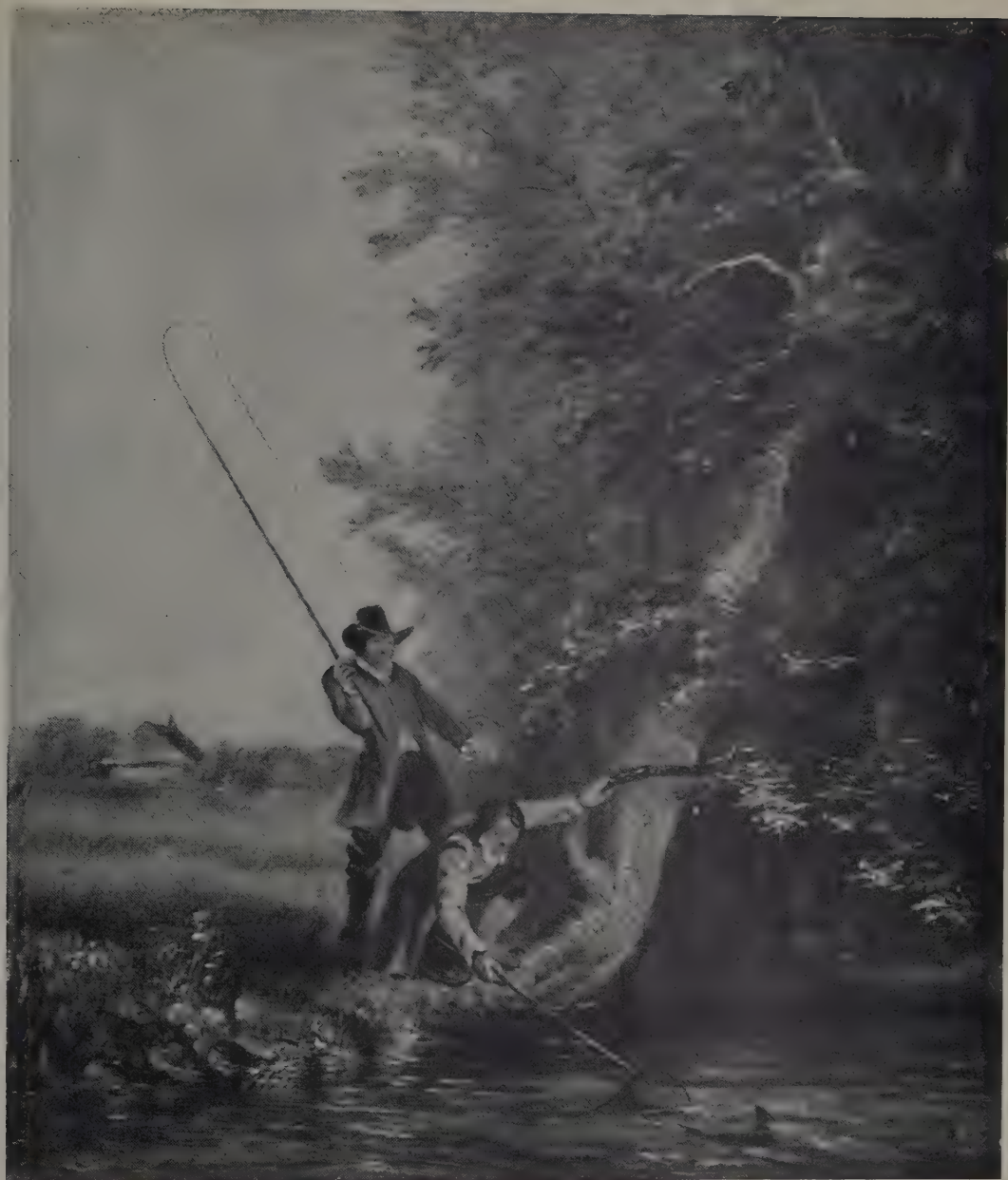
believe hares change sexes every year, just as Gasper Peuseus, a learned physician, tells of a people that once a year turn wolves, partly in shape, partly in conditions. Again, Pliny holds an opinion that various kinds of dewes being thickened and condensed, are acted upon by the sun's generative heat, and turned into many flies, worms, and little living creatures with which the sun and summer adorn and beautify the river-banks and meadows, for the recreation and contemplation of anglers ; some being hard and tough, some smooth and soft, some horned in their head, some in their tail, while some have no horns ; others have hair, some none ; and some have sixteen feet, some less. Miraculous dewes ! and Walton really seems to believe in them ! For he speaks in much the same tone of certain fields in Herefordshire, near Lemster, that " make the sheep that graze upon them more fat than the next, and also to bear finer wool," which is a fact of experiment. It is also in Chapter V that we find a very typical page, which begins after Charles Harvie's Verses on our Book of Common Prayer :

" And now, scholar, I think it will be time to repair to our angle-rods, which we left in the water to fish for themselves ; and you shall choose which shall be yours ; and it is an even lay, one of them catches.

" And, let me tell you, this kind of fishing with a dead rod, and laying night-hooks, are like putting money to use ; for they both work for the owners when they do nothing but sleep, or eat, or rejoice, as you know we have done this last hour, and sat as quietly and as free from cares under this sycamore, as Virgil's Tityrus and his Melibæus did under their broad beech-tree. No life, my honest scholar, no life so happy and so pleasant as the life of a well-governed angler ; for when the lawyer is swallowed up with business, and the statesman is preventing or contriving plots, then we sit on cowslip-banks, hear the birds sing, and possess ourselves in as much quietness as these silent silver streams, which we now see glide so quietly by us. Indeed, my good scholar, we may say of angling, as Dr. Boteler said of strawberries, ' Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did ' ; and so, if I might be judge, God never did make a more calm, quiet, innocent recreation than angling.

" I'll tell you, scholar, when I sat last on this primrose-bank, and looked down these meadows, I thought of them as Charles the Emperor did of the city of Florence : that they were too pleasant to be looked on, but only on holy-days. As I then sat on this very grass, I turned my present thoughts into verse : 'twas a Wish, which I'll repeat to you. . . ."

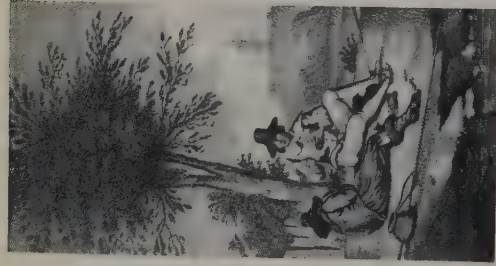
So Walton quotes *The Angler's Wish*, and passes on rapidly to the gipsies and the beggars, whose little drama he sees and watches from behind a honeysuckle hedge. We are out of doors, a mild sun shining after rain,



LANDING THE GRAYLING. From a small Oil Painting by JOHN ABSOLON, R.I. (1815-1895). Illustrated in the 1844 edition of "*The Compleat Angler*." The Arthur N. Gilbey Collection.



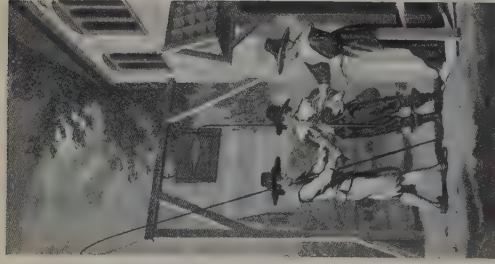
THE GREETING.



THE BREAKFAST.



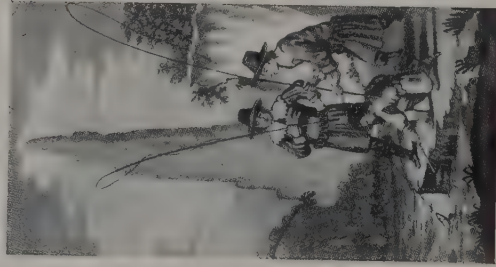
THE MILKMAID'S SONG.



THE HOSTESS.



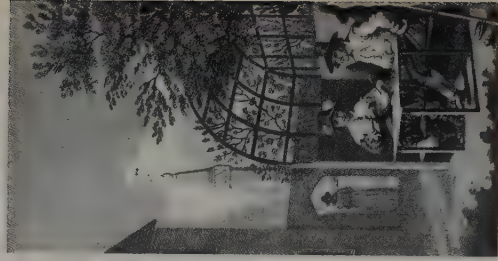
THE ANGLER'S SONG.



LANDING THE GRAYLING.



FLY-MAKING.



THE FAIRWELL.

and the air fragrant with flowers, though there is no worded description. Walton's cowslip-banks, and his honeysuckle hedge, and the sycamore under which he sits, are left entirely to our imagination, while Virgil's beech-tree is "broad." The master sees with his heart, so to speak, and not in forms and colours as a painter sees. A sweet English landscape recalls literary ideas to his mind, not paintings known to him. And it is odd to remember, after studying this page of Walton's art, that Sir Walter Scott dared to wish that Walton, like Franck, had made the northern tour, though clearly, as Andrew Lang protested: "Izaak would have been sadly to seek, running after a fish down a gorge of the Shin or the Brora, and the discomforts of the north would have finished his career. In Scotland he would not have found fresh sheets smelling of lavender."

V

That Walton in his book loves colour is certain, for he loves birds, flowers, trees, waters, the sky, and iridescent fish, that rival the finest lustre were made in Persia and in Italy. But he makes few attempts to put into words the impressions made upon him by wondrous tints, hues, and primary colours. What does he say of carp, for instance, that will live among reeds and mud in a lake or pond where there is no depth of water, remaining clean, and shining all red and bronze after you have caught them? What a colour there is in carp! and how it tests a painter's use of pigment! To Walton "the Carp is the queen of rivers; a stately, a good, and a very subtle fish;" he is "to be reckoned amongst those leather-mouthed fish which . . . have their teeth in their throat." Gesner is quoted as saying that "Carps have no tongue like other fish, but a piece of flesh-like fish in their mouth like to a tongue, and should be called a palate": "and it is thought that all Carps are not bred by generation, but that some breed other ways, as some Pikes do." Their colour remains undescribed; and at last we are told how their bodies are to be scoured, and rubbed with water and salt, but never scaled.

The gudgeon's colour is not forgotten: "He is of a fine shape, of a silver colour, and beautified with black spots both on his body and tail." The barbel, too, is described, but indefinitely: "This fish is of a fine cast and handsome shape, with small scales, which are placed after a most exact and curious manner." As to salmon, there is no reference to that magic of iridescence which sunlight and shadow diversify. But the final paragraph says:

"that the Trout and Salmon being in season, have, at their first taking out of the water, which continues during life, their bodies adorned, the one with such red spots, and the other with such black or blackish spots, as give them such an addition of natural beauty as, I think, was never given to any woman by the artificial paint or patches in which they [*the fishes, or the woman?*] so much pride themselves in this age. . . ."

Why a salmon or a trout should suggest a woman's painted cheeks dotted with black patches, who can tell? Then there is the idea, taken from Aldrovandus, that salmon, grayling and trout, "and all fish that live in clear and sharp streams, are made by their mother Nature of such exact shape and pleasant colours purposely to invite us to a joy and contentedness in feasting with her. Whether this is a truth or not, is not my purpose to dispute"; but since fish in clear and sharp streams attract otters and certain birds as continuously as they do anglers, Nature's invitation to a feast with her is nearer to the hospitality of Noah's Ark than to a special favour given to man. Walton finds Waltonian ideas in old books, so he quotes them, or grows from them an idea of his own. After quoting from Martial, for instance, he advises "anglers to be patient, and forbear swearing, lest they be heard, and catch no fish." Near to this touch of quaint humour is a bit of original observation: "If I catch a Trout in one meadow, he shall be white and faint, and very like to be lousy; and, as certainly, if I catch a Trout in the next meadow, he shall be strong, and red, and lusty, and much better meat." Here there's a feeling for colour.¹

Perhaps the prettiest perception of quality in colour will be found also at the end of Chapter V:

"Trust me, Scholar, I have caught many a trout in a particular meadow, that the very shape and the enamelled colour of him hath been such as hath joyed me to look on him: and I have then, with much pleasure, concluded with Solomon, 'Everything is beautiful in his season'."

Still, if you search without bias through *The Compleat Angler*, I believe

¹ Students should turn to Captain Franck in order to see what he says about salmon, and how he describes a spawner that is ill. "Then," he says, "her kipperish infirmity . . . alters her delicate proportion of body, and blots out the beautiful vermilion stain and sanguin tincture of blood, which vividly and transparently shines through her rubified gills; so that now she begins to look languid and pale, her fins they sag, and her scales by degrees lose their natural shining brightness; as also her regular and well-composed fabric of body looks thin, lean, and discoloured; and her head that grows big and disproportionable, as if distempered and invaded with the rickets, over whose chops hang a callous substance, not much unlike to a falcon's beak, which plainly denotes her out of season, and as plainly as anything demonstrates her kipper." Here and there in Franck we get a foretaste of Thomas Carlyle!

you will agree that Walton, generally, is most detailed in his notes on colour when he writes about one of those things in sport against which Dean Inge spoke a few months ago. That is to say, it is when writing of live baits, generally, that Walton fixes his attention most alertly on colour. Take his lingering scrutiny of caterpillars, "the very colours" of which "are, as one has observed, very elegant and beautiful."

"I shall, for a taste of the rest, describe one of them, which I will some time the next month show you feeding on a willow-tree, and you shall find him punctually to answer this very description: his lips and mouth somewhat yellow; his eyes black as jet; his forehead purple; his feet and hinder parts green; his tail two-forked and black; the whole body stained with a kind of red spots, which run along the neck and shoulder-blade, not unlike the form of St. Andrew's cross, or the letter X, made thus crosswise, and a white line drawn down his back to his tail: all which adds much beauty to his whole body. And it is to me observable, that at a fixed age this caterpillar gives over to eat, and towards winter comes to be covered over with a strange shell or crust, called an aurelia, and so lives a kind of dead life without eating all the winter; and, as others of several kinds turn to be several kinds of flies and vermin the spring following, so this caterpillar then turns to be a painted butterfly."

This detailed scheme of colour is not unaided by authority, for Walton seeks help from Sir Francis Bacon. Also a moment later, quite cheerfully, he repeats mythical observations in five verses from Du Bartas, ending:

"So rotten planks of broken ships do change
To barnacles. O transformation strange!
'Twas first a green tree, then a broken hull,
Lately a mushroom, now a flying gull!"

What would Walton have said if he could have seen barnacles clustered thickly on vast metal ships?

VI

His respect for his chosen authorities runs through his literary art like the varied patterning through lovely stones, and lustrous shells. This quality of his book carries us back from his time to the fifteenth century, on to the primitive Christians, and to our Saviour's peculiar affection for fishermen. What Christ approves, he argues, cannot be wrong. But Walton speaks also of fish-hooks as mentioned by the Prophet Amos, that

awful foreteller of divine hurricane and of punishing havoc. What right has Amos in a book on good-natured, plain fishermen?

When Walton speaks of the angling divines, he seems to be consoled, as though from time to time he has doubts as to whether the sport of angling is really as warrantable as the fishing that is done to feed a people. Take his passage on Alexander Nowel (1507-1601), a famous Oxford divine, who is supposed to have written the greater part of the Church Catechism. In 1550 he was made Dean of St. Paul's, and in 1595 principal of Brasenose College, where a portrait of him still hangs. As Walton says:

"this good man was a dear lover and constant practiser of Angling, as any age can produce; and his custom was to spend besides his fixed hours of prayer . . . a tenth part of his time in Angling; and, also, for I have conversed with those which have conversed with him, to bestow a tenth part of his revenue, and usually all his fish, amongst the poor that inhabited near to those rivers in which it was caught: saying often, 'That charity gave life to religion'; and, at his return to his house, would praise God he had spent that day free from worldly trouble; both harmlessly, and in recreation that became a churchman. And this good man was well content, if not desirous, that posterity should know he was an Angler; as may appear by his picture, now to be seen, and carefully kept, in Brazenose College, to which he was a liberal benefactor.¹ In which picture he is drawn, leaning on a desk, with his Bible before him; and on one hand of him, his lines, hooks, and other tackling, lying in a round; and, on his other hand, are his Angle-rods of several sorts; and by them is written, That he died 13 Feb. 1601, being aged ninety-five years, forty-four of which he had been Dean of St. Paul's Church; and that his age had neither impaired his hearing, nor dimmed his eyes, nor weakened his memory, nor made any of the faculties of his mind weak or useless. 'Tis said that Angling and temperance were great causes of these blessings; and I wish the like to all that imitate him, and love the memory of so good a man."²

An engraving in colour of the Nowel portrait was published by Gosden, price 2s. 6d., and a reproduction from it faces this page. It differs from Walton's description. The rods are hung horizontally along the wall behind the Doctor's tall hat; two hooks lie on the table, and another is held between the thumb and first finger of Nowel's right hand; and where is the "other tackling, lying in a round?" Is it under the Bible? Let us remember, in this connection, that Colonel Venables described how flies and hooks were carried:

¹ Would that all noted anglers had followed this example of art-patronage!
² Mr. Marston's 1915 edition of *The Compleat Angler*, p. 55.



DR. ALEX^R.

From an Original

Hall of Brazen



NOWEL,

Picture in the

Nose College, Oxford.

"Take so much Parchment as will be about four inches broad, and five long, make the longer end round, then take so many pieces more as will make five or six partitions; sew them all together, leaving the side of the longer square open, to put your lines, spare links, hooks ready fastened, and flies ready made, into the several partitions: this will contain much, lie flat and close in your pocket, in a little room."

Does a convenience of this kind seem to lie under Nowel's Bible in Gosden's engraving?

After examining the original picture, I venture to say yes to this question. The engraving takes some liberties with the painting, but in the main it is more correct than Walton's description. Either Walton wrote from hearsay or his memory failed him. The rods hang as they are shown in the engraving, only they are less visible in the picture. Below the rods, painted on the panel, is the Doctor's crest on our right, and on our left the inscription. These facts the engraver has omitted. The background in the painting is darker, with the result that the great hat and the stately official robe are not outlined conspicuously; and this applies also to the table, whose colour has faded from a greeny tone into a brownish one. Still, the engraving has much value as an artist's interpretation of our earliest angling portrait.

As the picture at Brasenose—it hangs in the hall by Orpen's portrait of Earl Haig—is glazed, several technical points cannot be studied minutely, but one of the hooks appears to have a tiny spur at its line-end to hold the binding-silk. How interesting it would be to see this painting unframed and in a strong light! It is well preserved, and Flemish in technique, I believe.

One thing in Walton's reverence for authority has provoked much criticism, and it unites him and us to the earliest known written work in English on Fishing with an Angle (*i.e.* a hook). I am referring to that famous jury of twelve flies which Walton borrows, apparently at second-hand, from a fifteenth-century treatise, without naming his authority. Concerning the borrowing he says: "Thus have you a jury of flies likely to betray and condemn all the Trouts in the river."¹

To show the origin of the jury of flies, let me set down in parallel columns

¹ Yet he says also in his epistle to the reader, fifth edition: "that whereas it is said by many, that in fly-fishing for a trout, the Angler must observe his twelve several flies for the twelve months of the year, I say, he that follows that rule, shall be as sure to catch fish, and be as wise, as he that makes hay by the fair days in an Almanack, and no surer. . . ." Excellent reasons are given, and they resemble those given by Colonel Venables (pp. 15, 16, 17, of his book).

what Walton says, and what is given in the ancient treatise commonly attributed to Dame Barnes or Bernes :

Walton

" You are to note that there are twelve kinds of artificial made Flies to angle with upon the top of the water. Note, by the way, that the fittest season of using these is in a blustering windy day, when the waters are so troubled that the natural fly cannot be seen, or rest upon them.

" The First is the dun-fly, in March ; the body is made of dun wool ; the wings of the partridge's feathers.

" The second is another dun-fly : the body of black wool, and the wings made of the black drake's feathers, and of the feathers under his tail.²

" The third is the stone-fly, in April : the body is made of black wool ; made yellow under the wings and under the tail, and so made with wings of the drake.

" The fourth is the ruddy-fly, in the beginning of May : the body made of red wool, wrapped about with black silk ; and the feathers are the wings of the drake ; with the feathers of a red capon also, which hang dangling on his sides next to the tail.

" The fifth is the yellow or greenish fly, in May likewise : the body made of yellow wool, and the wings made of the red cock's hackle or tail.

" The sixth is the black-fly, in May also : the body made of black wool, and lapped about with the herl of a peacock's tail : the wings are made of the wings of a brown capon, with his blue feathers in his head.

*Dame Bernes*¹

" These be the XII flies with which ye shall angle to the trout and grayling, and dubbe [*dress*] like as ye shall now hear me tell.

" *March.* The dun-fly, the body of the dun wool, and the wings of the partridge. Another dun-fly, the body of black wool, the wings of the blackest drake ; and the lay under the wing and under the tail.

" *April.* The stone-fly, the body of black wool : and yellow under the wing and under the tail, and the wings of the drake.

" In the beginning of May, a good fly—the body of roddied (*reddened*) wool, and lapped about with black silk : the wings of the drake, and of the red capon's hackle.³

" *May.* The yellow fly, the body of yellow wool, the wings of the red cock's hackle, and of the drake lytted [*died*] yellow.

" The black louter [*leaper*] : the body of black wool, and lapped about with the herl of the peacock's tail, and the wings of the red capon with a blue head.

¹ I put the words in to-day's spelling.

³ The red spinner.

² The olive dun.

Walton

"The seventh is the sad yellow-fly in June: the body is made of black wool, with a yellow list on either side; and the wings taken off the wings of a buzzard, bound with black braked hemp.

"The eighth is the moorish-fly: made, with the body, of dusky wool; and the wings made of the blackish mail of the drake.

"The ninth is the tawny-fly, good until the middle of June: the body made of tawny wool; the wings made contrary one against the other, made of the whitish mail of the wild drake.

"The tenth is the wasp-fly in July; the body made of black wool, lapped about with yellow silk; the wings made of the feathers of the drake, or of the buzzard.

"The eleventh is the shell-fly, good in mid-July: the body made of greenish wool, lapped about with the herl of a peacock's tail: and the wings made of the wings of the buzzard.

"The twelfth is the dark drake-fly, good in August: the body made with black wool, lapped about with black silk; his wings are made with the mail of the black drake, with a black head. . . ."

We see, then, that Walton follows the ancient treatise obediently, though he fails to cite it; so I pass on at once to the lady to whom the treatise has been attributed, together with other work.

Dame Bernes

"June. The Dun Cut: the body of black wool and a yellow lyste [stripe] after either side: the wings of the buzzard bound on with barked hemp.¹

"The Maure [Mauve?] Fly: ² the body of dusky wool, the wings of the blackest mail (speckled feathers) of the wild drake.

"The Tandy-fly [tan-coloured fly, probably the dung-fly]: at St. William's Day, the body of tandy wool, and the wings, contrary either against other, of the whitest mail of the wild drake.

"July. The wasp-fly, the body of black wool, and lapped about with yellow thread: the wings of buzzard.

"The shell-fly at St. Thomas's Day, the body made of green wool, and lapped about with the herl of the peacock's tail: wings of the bossard [buzzard].³

"August. The drake-fly. The body of black wool, and lapped about with black silk: wings of the mail of black drake, with a black head."⁴

¹ Hemp stained with bark.

² A mulberry-coloured fly, *Ephemera Danica*, is probably the *Maure*-fly of the text. *Maure* suggests a misprint for mauve.

³ The same as the shell-fly of Ronalds, according to Mr. J. W. Hills, *A History of Fly Fishing for Trout*. Mr. Hills identifies eleven of the dozen flies.

⁴ Is this like to-day's alder-fly?

CHAPTER XI

DAME BARNES OR BERNES AND "THE BOKE OF ST. ALBANS"

I

The Boke of St. Albans, in its first and second editions, is an invaluable relic of the fifteenth century; it treats of hawking, hunting, fishing, and heraldry, and contains the spirit of feudalism in a very peculiar and rare degree. To find a copy of this book in a private library is to come upon a treasure which should be kept under glass: only reprints of it should be used by students. There is a choice copy of the second edition (1496) in Mr. Arthur N. Gilbey's great collection of books on fishing, and if it could relate the whole of its experiences, much light would be thrown upon the vexed question of the book's authorship, or compilation.

From time to time this question has been debated, not always in a good-tempered manner; and, as might have been expected, neither side in the controversy has convinced the other. Twenty-four years ago, in April 1899, after long research, I reviewed the disputable points for *Baily's Magazine*, choosing the affirmative side as the better one, and writing more or less in defence of Dame Juliana Barnes, or Bernes. Since then every one of the points has retained its attractiveness. Some students of history, like the late Augustus Jessopp, D.D., a writer of beautiful English, have never lost their faith in Dame Barnes, Bernes, or Berner, while others have wished to see her thrown into the limbo of discarded myths. Jessopp, in his essay on St. Alban's and Her Historian, Matthew Paris, says confidently:

"By and by, too, came the printing-press, which John Herford set up in 1480. Wynkyn de Worde was sometime schoolmaster of St Alban's, and Lady Juliana Berner's famous volume issued from the Abbey Press, while Caxton was still pursuing his craft in the almonry of another monastery at Westminster."¹

In those far-off times, of course, copyright did not exist, and writers made use of their forerunners without citing them as freely as inhabitants

¹ *Studies by a Recluse*, third edition, p. 38.

of a manor, the great English peasantry, drew water from common wells and brooks. We find, then, with no surprise, that *The Boke of St. Albans* in its first edition was compiled from old manuscripts. Some of Juliana's foes have described it as a mere hash-up, as though hashes in cookery were outside the art of cooking; but, after all, this particular mediæval hash is a good one for its period, with a distinguishing seasoning and flavour. Better still, the second edition is a great improvement on the first; it contains a new treatise, one on fishing with an angle—that is to say, fishing with a hook, from the Anglo-Saxon *angel*, a hook or fish-hook; and this new treatise has a good many qualities of an original composition. Its value as a piece of early literature comes mainly, we may believe, from its writer's own temperament and experience. At present it is read only from time to time by a person here and there, because its punctuation and spelling have not been modernized by a sympathetic editor; but if these marks of the rust of age were rubbed off, as we remove dust from the surface of a mirror, the true expression of an author's mind would be made clear to us, and anglers would find that Walton's earliest herald writes as a woman, and is friendly and readable except in a few sentences.

Andrew Lang, in his and E. J. Sullivan's edition of *The Compleat Angler*, notes not only that Walton's keynote, his carefully chosen first sentence, echoes the opening of an earlier book, *A Treatise of the Nature of God* (London, 1599); he goes on to say that a much earlier treatise, the one on *Fishing with an Angle*, commonly attributed to Dame Juliana Barnes, is a more important source of Izaak's inspiration, because its initial paragraph has the very spirit of *The Compleat Angler*, full of birds' music, and redolent of the dawn; charmed with that vernal and matutinal air of spring-time in European literature to which the age following Walton would not listen. This, without doubt, is entirely true. What higher compliment could be paid to a fifteenth-century book on freshwater fishing? Let me give an example freed from archaic spelling and punctuation. I choose one—not from the booklet printed in 1496, but—from an earlier MS. version of it, which now and then has better phrasing:¹

“Solomon in his parables saith that a glad spirit maketh a flowering age. That is to say, a fair age and a long; and since it is so I ask this question, which be the means and cause to induce a man to a merry spirit?” . . . The angler “shall have his wholesome walk and merry at his own ease,

¹ See AN OLDER FORM OF THE TREATYSE OF FYSSHYNGE WITH AN ANGLE, attributed to DAME JULIANA BARNES; with a Preface and Glossary by Thomas Satchell (London, 1883).

and also many a sweet air [scent] of divers herbs and flowers, that shall make him right hungry and well disposed in his body. He shall hear the melodies melodious of the harmony of birds; he shall see also the young swans and cygnets following their eyroures [*or eyrar, a brood of swans, or its parent birds*]; ducks, coots, herons, and many other fowls with their broods, which me seemeth better than all the noise of hounds, and blasts of horns, and other games that falconers and hunters can make, or else the games that fowlers can make; and if the angler take the fish, hardly then is there no man merrier than he in his spirits. . . .”

So we are taken at once into spring-time fishing, and the only birds named are water birds. Others are in the woods and fields, a chorus to be heard while the angler seeks for the joys that a good catch will bring to him. Later we shall see what Dame Bernes says of those royal and perilous field sports to which kings and their aristocracy gave so much time, and such a rigorous protection.

Andrew Lang, besides dwelling on the charm of her beginning, says: “A manuscript, probably of 1430–1450, has been published by Mr. Satchell (London, 1883). This book may be a translation of an unknown French original. . . .”¹

Mediæval French being the language of mediæval sportsmanship, this conjecture comes to all students; but France was proud of her MS. books on sport, and preserved them carefully. They were transcribed and circulated; and I am not aware that a French bibliophile has ever put his hand on a French original of England’s first printed book on fishing. Even if such a manuscript were lost, surely some passages from it would be preserved by other MS. records of French mediæval sportsmanship.

France had certainly a famous and a versatile authoress, Christine de Pisan, who lived from 1363 to 1431; but there is no reference to angling in the list of her very different works. Still, it is very probable that Christine’s fame, which passed from country to country, stirred up emulation in the minds of some clever Englishwomen. We must note particularly among her patrons the Earl of Salisbury, who went to Paris to arrange the marriage of Richard II to Charles VI’s daughter, and was so impressed by Christine that he induced her to commit her elder son to his charge, and to allow the boy to be educated in England with his own son. When “the evil country

¹ This earlier MS. version of the famous little book is a thing of fragments, but exceedingly interesting: again and again its wording differs from the transcript employed by Wynkyn de Worde; its punctuation is more primitive, but its English is the same—the dialect of the neighbourhood of London used in fifteenth-century literature, as Professor Skeat pointed out.

of England" showed that "fickleness" of which Christine accused her by the deposition of Richard and the decapitation of Salisbury, Henry IV tried to attract Christine to his Court; but she was too loyal to regard him as other than a usurper, apart from that devotion to her adopted country which led her also to refuse advantageous offers from the Duke of Milan. Then there are two facts more. The gracious Earl Rivers translated into English Christine's *Moral Proverbs*; and Caxton himself, by command of Henry VII, rendered into English and printed her best book, *Le Livre des Faits d'Armes et de Chevalerie*.

About five-and-twenty years ago I studied much of Christine side by side with *The Boke of St. Albans*, believing that Dame Bernes might be regarded, without extravagance, as the probable literary child of the Franco-Italian lady's fame.

II

And now let me say of *The Boke of St. Albans*, that, when viewed as a whole and without any intentional bias, it does not seem to suggest several compilers, its diction having uniform peculiarities. So far as I am able to see, the subject-matter of the whole book passed through the alembic of the same author's mind. This is important, because some debaters of our time have said that Dame Barnes, or Bernes, wrote merely the twenty-three pages of verse on the art of hunting. Sir Walter Scott knew better.

The Dame has had ardent devotees, and some of them have united her to a distinguished family which had three surnames—a small number in those days. Wynkyn de Worde, who printed *The Boke of St. Albans*, had more than twice as many; and in times very much later than his, when Milton was spelling dog with two "g's", Herrick's name was written also Hearicke, Heyricke, Erick, and Eyrick. In like manner, the family of Berners appears to have had its own innocent and useless *aliases*, Barnes and Bernes, Barners and Berners. It was an Essex family, having its seat at Roding Berners, where its feudal authority extended over several estates, one of which was called the Manor of *Berneston*; thus we may suppose that the names Bernes and Berners had a territorial origin. Out of this family, in after years, came the well-known Lord Barnes or Berners, who translated Froissart's *Chronicles*; he died in 1533.¹

When we meet with the Dame for the first time, she is introduced to us

¹ Note that Leland called John Lord Berners, the translator of Froissart, Lord Barnes (*Itinerary*, vol. vi. fo. 36-37).

as Dam Julyans Barnes. It is a curious name, very tempting to anyone who would condemn its owner to "dust and damned oblivion." We find it in the original edition of *The Boke of St. Albans* (1486), at the end of the rhymed treatise on the chase :

"Explicit Dam Julyans Barnes in her boke of Huntynge."

But I shall be told, perhaps, that the word Dam, a relic of the thirteenth century, was probably a misprint for either Dan or Dom., as gentlemen in the fifteenth century did not employ it when speaking of a lady. This thought may have occurred to the first readers of the book ; for the volume issued from the press in St. Alban's Abbey, where a monk named Julyans Barnes might have been known as Dom. Julyans Barnes. For this reason, and no other, I wish to draw particular attention to the following line, which occurs in the book's second edition, printed at Westminster in 1496 :

"Explicit DAME Julyans Bernes doctryne in her boke of Huntynge."

This change in the colophon was made by Wynkyn de Worde, Caxton's successor in house and business, and a contemporary of the Dame's earliest biographer, John Bale, Bishop of Ossory, who was born at Cove, in Suffolk, when *The Boke of St. Albans* (first edition) was only nine years old. Bale's account of Juliana is written in Latin ; translated it runs thus :

"She was an illustrious lady, eminently endowed with superior qualities, both mental and personal. Among the many solaces of human life she held the sports of the field in the highest estimation. This heroic woman welcomed them as exercises for noble men after wars, after the administration of justice and the concerns of State. She had learned, perhaps, that Ulysses instituted such diversions after the conquest of Troy, and that they received Plato's commendation, as the sources of renewed enjoyment to those who suffered, either from domestic calamities or the injuries of war. These arts, therefore, this ingenious woman was desirous to convey in her writings, as the first elements of nobility, believing that brave young men of honour would cultivate them to guard against vain sloth. . . . She wrote in her native tongue on the Art of Hawking, on the Art of Hunting, on the Laws of Arms ; and she is said to have edited a small work on fishing. She flourished [*or was alive*] in the year of our Lord 1460, in the reign of Henry VI."

The small work on fishing mentioned by Bale appeared in the second edition of *The Boke of St. Albans*. From it I have taken the quaint woodcut which adds much interest to Chapter XII. It is a fine treatise, a worthy forerunner of *The Compleat Angler*, and we know that Walton got many

hints from its pages, directly or indirectly. That Bale's contemporaries should have given it to Dame Juliana does not surprise me in the least, for the essay is nothing if not womanly in its tone of thought. We no longer feel that Juliana is writing at second-hand for men, translating her subject-matter from such old manuscripts as the *Vénerie de Twety* of the time of Edward II. The sport of which she speaks now is her own favourite sport, and she says: "Me were loath to write more than I know and have proved." Only fishing with an angle suits her, "for all other manner of fishing is laborious and grievous, often making folks full wet and cold, which many times hath been cause of great infirmities." Later we shall read other passages marked by a timidity which no Englishman of the warlike fifteenth century would have dared to express.

For the rest, Bale is a good witness. He lived when *The Boke of St. Albans* was new and popular; he had nothing to gain by telling lies about the authoress, and his testimony has not yet been shaken.

Bale died in 1563, just twelve years before the birth of the Dame's second biographer. I am referring to William Burton (1575-1645), the historian of Leicestershire, and the elder brother of Robert Burton, whose *Anatomy of Melancholy* was a friend to Milton, to Dr. Johnson, to Byron, to Charles Lamb. Both brothers were interested in Dame Juliana, for Robert employed her words when he wished to do justice to the lesser joys of angling. As for William, his remarks on Juliana's life and parentage were found in his own copy of *The Boke of St. Albans*. Here they are:

"This booke was made by the Lady Julian Berners, daughter of Sir James Berners, of Berners Roding, in Essex, Knight, and sister to Richard Lord Berners. She was Lady Prioress of Sopwell, a nunnery neere St. Albans, in wch Abby of St. Albans this was printed, 1486, 2 H. 7. She was living 1460, 39 H. 6, according to John Bale."¹

There is no hesitation in this note, and we cannot suppose that Burton would deceive himself wittingly. His aim was to remind himself of certain things relating to the first authoress born and bred in England, whose volume had been re-published many times. It is believed that the fishing treatise was reprinted sixteen times in about a century. It is true that Bale, who was Burton's predecessor, spoke neither of Sir James Berners nor of Sopwell Nunnery. Much has been made of this fact by several of the Dame's foes. Yet we, who know so little about Shakespeare's personal history, cannot possibly regard Bale's silence as a proof of Burton's untrustworthiness.

¹ See Joseph Haslewood's Reprint of *The Boke of St. Albans*, 1811, p. 7.

As well might we say that Juliana was a foundling, because Bale said nothing about her parents.

The truth is that Bale merely followed the bent of his mind, and, being a thorough-going moralist, he devoted four-fifths of his remarks to Juliana's estimate of the moral value of field sports to men. As for Burton, he "was one whose natural geny leading him to the studies of heraldry, genealogies, and antiquities, he became excellent in these obscure and intricate matters" (Wood, *Ath. Oxon.*, vol. ii., col. 75). This is enough to explain why his thoughts were given to Juliana's parentage. In his time, moreover, several offshoots of the Berners' family were still living, so we cannot say that Burton had no means of ascertaining whether the authoress belonged to the same feudal house that gave England an excellent translator of Froissart.

The rest of Burton's note reminds me that some critics of our time have refused to enter a nunnery with Dame Barnes, Bernes, or Berners. A prioress, I admit, seems unfit to be a sportswoman, hence I should not be sorry to get my heroine out of Sopwell. This would be a pleasant exploit in biographical knight-errantry. But although I have tried my best to make it a real exploit, my "Museum headaches" have been borne without recompense. They haven't won for me even a life-ticket of admittance to the reading-room. Their only result is my firm belief that the evidence of William Burton has not been refuted by its attackers, who have declared that Juliana's name is not found among the prioresses of Sopwell. But the records of Sopwell were so dispersed when the religious houses were pillaged, that very little is to be learnt about the prioresses who ruled over the convent.

There is a gap in the enumeration of those who reigned during the fifteenth century. Letitia Wyttenham was prioress from the sixth of Henry IV (1405) to 1426. Four years later, in 1430, Matilda de Flamstead died, aged 81 and 8 weeks. Thence we jump at a bound to the year 1481, when Joan Chapelle was deposed. We know not when Joan was elected, but it has been contended, more or less expressly, that she held office from 1430 to 1481, simply because she was set aside on account of her age.

This argument, however, is very weak, since the honour of governing a mediæval convent was not infrequently conferred on the aged. For example, a year before Joan Chapelle lost her dignity, a prioress was deposed in the Hospital of St. Mary des Prez, another convent at St. Albans; and this prioress, the Lady Elizabeth Baroune, had reigned only ten years. The reason given drew attention to her "old age," to "the infirmities of her body,"

and to their "inconveniences." So, on April 4th, 1480, Alice Wafer took her place, but only to make way the same year for Christina Basset, whose authority, in 1489, passed into the hands of Elena Germyn. With these examples of short reigns before us, we cannot assume that Joan Chapelle's term of office lasted fifty-one years, bridging the gap between 1430 and 1481.

I feel, then, that Burton's testimony is not damaged by the imperfect knowledge we have of the history of Sopwell during the fifteenth century. It is partly for this reason, and partly because old Chauncy, in his *Hertfordshire* (p. 449), gives what seems to be independent evidence to the same effect, that I place Dame Bernes tentatively among the predecessors of Joan Chapelle.¹

Yet a convent does seem a queer place of retreat for our Di Vernon of the pen. We wonder why she took the veil, becoming as one dead to her own kinsfolk. Had she no feudal ambitions—no desire to be mentioned by the heralds, no wish to become the mother of brave young soldiers? These questions may be best answered, perhaps, by considering the sorrows that fell upon the Berners' family. Sir James Berners, a favourite of Richard II, was beheaded in 1388 as a supposed enemy to the public weal. It was thus Juliana lost her supposed father. As to her mother, she soon married again, taking for her second husband Sir Roger Clarendon, knight, a natural son of Edward, Prince of Wales. Political strife ran riot everywhere, and convents were often places of refuge.

Here, however, one more question arises. Could a nun be a sportswoman? Many nuns were allowed to keep pet animals; many were censured because they retained a worldly fondness for luxuries; and surely even a prioress lost no dignity if she acquired knowledge of fishing, since the discipline of fast days, and the necessity of keeping the "stew" well stocked, were matters of important consideration. Besides, a sparkling little stream, the Ver, running almost at the foot of Sopwell Nunnery, was gay with the splash of trout. As the convent was subject to the Abbey of St. Alban, the rougher sports of the field may have been forbidden, for I find that one abbot protested against such sports, telling the prior and the brethren at Redburne

¹ Three points more may be added: (a) William Burton says, in his *Description of Leicestershire*, pp. 39, 40, that Leland, in the 25th year of Henry VIII's reign, had a royal commission that allowed him to take whatever documents he needed from the religious houses. (b) Leland collected his notes into volumes, and four of them passed into Burton's hands, and were very useful to him. (c) John Bale, also, as the *Dictionary of National Biography* remarks, based his knowledge "on an examination of MSS. in monastic libraries, many of which have since been lost."

that they were not to hunt, and that they must immediately give up the exercise of jumping their neighbour's hedges. I do not think, however, that Juliana had any wish to become "a sporting parson in petticoats." She was a timid woman, as her treatise on fishing tells us.

We know already that Juliana was alive in 1460. The date of her birth is not known. But let us suppose that she was born in 1377, eleven years before her father's disgrace and execution. Richard II had just come to the throne. Keep this fact in your mind, and think of all the national events that happened during our heroine's long life. You will think of Richard II's reign, then of Henry IV's; you will next call up to recollection the heroic days of Agincourt; then come the wondrous achievements of the Maid of Orleans; and onwards your thoughts go till they reach the 22nd of May, 1455, when the nuns in Sopwell heard the Yorkists and Lancastrians meet in their first crash of battle. It is thus that Juliana's life should be clothed and charmed with a thousand interests, unless Burton and Sir Henry Chauncy can be refuted by facts.

I cannot leave my subject without saying a few words about a bibliophile now dead, the senior Bernard Quaritch, who tried to prove that Juliana Berners was unworthy of any attention. You will find his remarks in his *General Catalogue*, vol. ii., p. 840.

Mr. Quaritch had a theory in his mind, and was free to unfold it in the way which seemed best to him. In his printed words he begins by saying that the rhymed treatise on the chase is written in the form of a lesson, in the course of which a dame speaks to her pupils very endearingly, calling them "sonnys" and her "lief chyldre." Well, who were these children? Was the treatise put together that gentlewomen might teach their sons the art and language of hunting, to be ignorant of which was to be without one of the distinguishing marks of good birth and good breeding? Mr. Quaritch thinks not. The verses were written, says he, "not for scions of the aristocracy, but for simple foresters who aided in the chase," and whose proper school (mark this!) was active experience in the fields and forests. Then Mr. Quaritch continues thus:

"We may go much further, and question the very existence of the lady, except as a personification of the *Domus Juliani*, or St. Julian's Hospital near St. Alban's. Her book is the Barnes' book of Hunting . . . and is simply a work of rhymed instructions from a supposed schoolmistress (Dame) to her *Barnes*, or schoolchildren. . . ."

Now, as the chase was put under the protection of St. Hubert, and not

under that of St. Julian, we naturally ask ourselves why the *Domus Juliani* should have been a sporting school for simple foresters. With this question in mind, we go in search of information, and we soon learn from Cussan, Newcome, Dugdale, and the records of St. Alban's Abbey, that the *Domus Juliani* was—a leper hospital! Yes, and it was a small monastery as well, since no fewer than five priests attended to the needs of six leprous brothers. Such was its character throughout the whole of Juliana's life; it never became a school. No “supposed schoolmistress” ever taught there, and its lepers and its priests were not “simple foresters who aided in the chase.” Nevertheless, we can all admire the unexpected notion, so Gilbertian in its whimsicality, that an age of ignorance and of terrible civil war encouraged a kind of sporting college for rude yeomen. We may yet be told that the fifteenth century, in addition to having studious simple foresters who could not read, had also its gallant Peace Society and its anti-vaccinationists.

Owing to the limits of my space—and no one could plant a thorn-bush in a thimble—I have left many things unsaid; and since the priory and the Dame's family history are regarded by many as controversial, let us remember that neither of these points has any bearing on *The Boke of St. Albans* as a piece of old feudal history. We can think of the compiler as Dame Juliana Barnes, or Bernes, while reading her handiwork.¹

A writer of to-day, with no evidence to support him, has brought a charge of mendacity against Bishop Bale, William Burton, and honest old Chauncy. I decline to name this writer because I do not wish to advertise his breach of good sportsmanship. An unprovable accusation of mendacity should never be printed in a book on sport. The dead cannot defend themselves, unless Oscar Wilde speaks for them from the other world, after achieving a miracle by forgetting himself.

¹ In the reference catalogue in the British Museum, you must turn to the name BERNES taken from the *second* edition of *The Boke of St. Albans*.

CHAPTER XII

THE TREATISE ON FISHING WITH AN ANGLE

I

WE must begin by connecting the little book with some of the conditions of life in mediæval England. A famous writer on angling, the late Francis Francis, forgot this preliminary work when he wrote a brief introduction on freshwater fishing for the official catalogue of the International Fisheries Exhibition, just forty years ago (1883).¹ Francis chose for quotation the final paragraph :

“ because that this present treatise should not come to the hands of each idle person which [*who*] would desire it if it were imprinted alone by itself and put in a little pamphlet, therefore I have compiled it in a greater volume of divers books concerning to gentle and noble men, to the intent that the foresaid idle persons, which [*who*] should have but little measure in the said disport of fishing, should not by this means utterly destroy it.”²

Francis Francis regards these words as a proof that angling in the fifteenth century was by no means a common practice as it is to-day. He adds that :

“ if the noble and gentle Dame Juliana could only come out of Sopwell Priory to the not far distant banks of the Lea, and see the class of people who throng its banks on any and every holiday to indulge in the gentle ‘ dysporte of fysshynge with an angle,’ she would indeed be filled with amazement. For the sport of angling is now not only the sport of the select few, but of the many ; it is a beneficent, health-giving pursuit, good both for the body and mind of the toiling thousands or even millions who throng the back streets of our large cities, and who have no other inducement to leave their unhealthy habitations for the fresh air of the country. . . .”

Now it happened that the population of England, even at the end of Elizabeth’s reign, could not have been more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions, as the late Thorold Rogers proved in his great history of *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*.³

¹ Now a rare book. The copy on my desk belongs to *The Field*, and was lent to me by the Angling Editor, Mr. Hugh T. Sheringham.

² Andrew Lang approved these words, adding that to-day, “ in Southern Scotland, idle persons have left few fish to disport with, and the trout is likely to become an extinct animal. . . .”

³ See the edition of 1894 (*Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London*), p. 463, also p. 119.

During the fifteenth century the population was probably less, not more, than in Shakespeare's time. Hence we act absurdly if we say that anglers were less numerous then than they are now. What else could they be? But *the percentage* may not have been less, because rivers and streams that flowed through common lands were free to the people, and those that ran through villages, and were guarded by lords of manors, belonged to that wise system of government which shared rights between the inhabitants of a manor. Thorold Rogers does not say that villagers were forbidden to fish in manorial mill-streams, or in manorial pools, tarns, and lakes; and Juliana Bernes, in the penultimate paragraph of her precious booklet, tries to protect the poor from the rapacity of rich anglers:

"Ye that can angle and take fish to your pleasures as this foresaid treatise teacheth and sheweth you, I charge and require you in the name of all noble men that ye fish not in any poor man's several water, as his pond, stew, or other necessary things to keep fish in, without his licence or good will. Nor that ye use break any man's gins lying in the weirs, and in other places due unto them [*i.e. their owners*]. For after a fish is taken in a man's gin, if the gin be laid in the common waters, or else in such waters as he hireth, it is his own proper goods. And if ye take it away ye rob him, which is a right shameful deed to [*for*] any noble man to do. . . ."

When such misconduct comes from thieves and robbers, the Dame continues, the offenders "are punished for their evil deeds by the neck, and otherwise, when they may be espied and taken." And among other orders, or warnings, she tells her readers never to break any man's hedges, never to leave gates open, and never to take overmuch game at one time, but to be satisfied with a sufficient ration. "Also ye shall bestir yourself to nourish the game in all that ye may, and to destroy all such things as be denourers [*impoverishers*] of it. . . ."

And here is another point. When the Dame wrote of idle persons she was thinking of poachers, and of that riff-raff of the roads and lanes whom J. J. Jusserand has made real in a very good book, *Wayfaring Life During the Middle Ages*. She had no reason to think of anyone else, because the settled population was familiar with the accepted customs and laws of manors and towns.

Fish and fishing, again, during the Middle Ages, were everybody's concern, because the Church prescribed that everybody just before the coming of spring, should live on salted fish, and also because the majority of the people, for five or six months of the year, lived on salted provisions, which included

fish. The pig was the principal food ; but even mutton and poultry were salted ; and a great and brave trade in salted sea fish grew more and more intrepid. Indeed, searching for new fishing grounds was the earliest enterprise of British sailors.

It follows, then, that the first book on freshwater angling comes to us from a period when fishing of every sort was very active in the social drama as a great popular need, intensified by very slow means of distribution, and by the many disasters that little fishing-boats encountered at sea, often off the stormy Shetland Islands, and often near Iceland. Berwick distributed salmon, and Grimsby cod ; Yarmouth was the centre of the herring industry ; and fish from Aberdeen went by the name of Haberdens. At last, in the fifteenth century, the Bristol fishermen, fired by trade emulation, and now familiar with the mariner's compass, became a successful rival of the great eastern ports.¹

Sea fish being hard to catch, and slow to circulate when salted and packed, local supplies of freshwater fish were all the more valuable ; so that Dame Bernes had good reasons to be at variance both with the rapacious nobles and gentles who invaded the poor man's fishing, and also with " idle persons," such as poachers, outlaws, wandering jugglers and acrobats and beggars, who lived on the roads, and often slept in deep woods. She was not opposed to the settled country folk as we have seen. Indeed, there is a tender and ideal tone in her booklet whenever she turns from a statement of technical facts and writes from her heart.

The idealism is very feminine, particularly when we remember the general coarseness of manners, and the masculinity of mind thrust upon most women by warlike customs, as in jousts, and by the need of managing when a dearth of active men was caused by armed strife. Even fly-fishing—called angling with a *dubbe*²—seems to please her less than quiet fishing with an angle ; for she thinks of that quietness in which " ye may serve God devoutly in saying affectuously your customable prayer. . . ."³ Also, in another part of her book, she relates that " all other manner of fishing is laborious and grievous, often making folks full wet and cold, which many times hath been cause of great infirmities. . . ."

As for hunting, she says briefly a good deal against it, but less than she could and would say were she free to speak out fully. Naturally she thinks

¹ See Thorold Rogers, p. 124.

² In provincial English, as Halliwell says, to *dub a fly* is to dress a fishing-fly.

³ Is this a nun-like touch ? Did mundane anglers think devoutly of customable prayers when fish did not bite ?

of her readers, sporting nobles and gentles. Her criticism of hunting, free from the variable spelling of her day, runs :

" . . . hunting as to mine intent [*in my opinion*] is too laborious, for the hunter must always run and follow his hounds, travingling and sweating full sore. He bloweth till his lips blister, and when he weneth [*thinks, or imagines, or fancies*] it be a hare, full oft it is a hedgehog. Thus he chaseth and wotteth not what. He cometh home at eve rain-beaten, sore pricked with thorns, and his clothes torn, wet-shod, all miry ; some of his hounds lost, some surbated [*with bruised feet, footsore*]. Such griefs and many others happen to the hunter, which for displeasure of them that love it [*i.e. hunting*] I dare not report. . . ."¹

Various womanly reasons enable her also to set aside hawking and fowling as too laborious, and too full of mishaps ; but here, too, she pulls herself up, through fear of offending her readers.

She is aware that her personal views are not proverbs hallowed by time, so she employs them only because she wants to say that fishing with an angle, that is, fishing with a hook, is the sport best fitted to make her heart glad. Its worst troubles, she believes, come from the angler himself, not from his pastime ; while many birds sing around him, and meadow flowers put fragrance into the soft air, and waterfowl with their broods are busy.

" Also whoso will use the game of angling, he must rise early, which thing is profitable to man in this wise. That is to wit : most to the health of his soul, for it shall cause him to be holy ; and to the health of his body, for it shall cause him to be whole. Also to the increase of his goods, for it shall make him rich. As the old English proverb sayeth in this wise : Whoso will rise early shall be holy, healthy, and zely [*i.e. blessed*]. . . . And therefore to all you who shall be virtuous, gentle and freeborn, I write and make this simple treatise following, by which you may have the full craft of angling to disport you as you lust, to the intent that your age may the more flourish and the more longer to endure."

Oddly enough, when writers of our time have reviewed this old treatise, they have had no perception for its hidden essence and its life as a work that reveals its author's temperament and character. They have said, for instance, that its opening follows the traditional sporting model : a general review of all sports is made, they say, with a conclusion in favour of the one in which the writer is interested. If English treatises on angling had been common in the fifteenth century, it would be useful to talk about

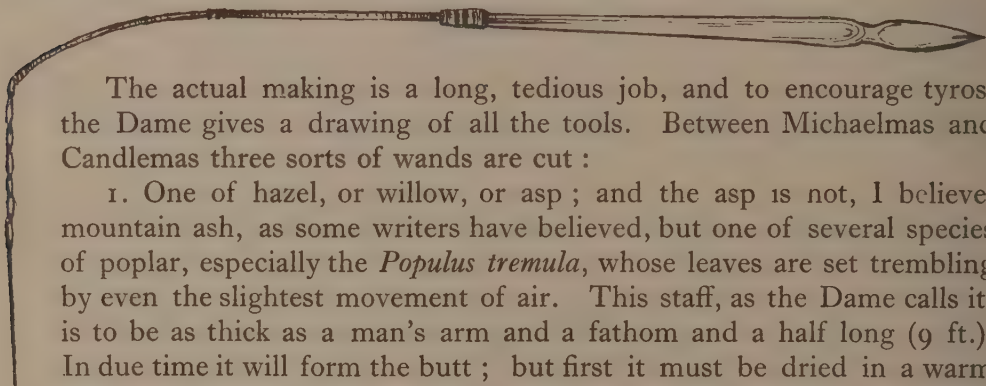
¹ In two places I have added some words from the earlier MS. version. "Sore pricked with thorns," for instance. The 1496 version says too bluntly : "rain-beaten, pricked, and his clothes torn. . . ." A tired transcriber ?

a traditional sporting model ; but even then it would be better to remember that men of good birth were intolerantly fond of the more dangerous sports. To us, then, the thing best worth seeing is the feminine way in which our first known author on angling claimed precedence for the rod and line. By daring to act in this way a new example was set, and from it a new tradition came into English writings on English sports.

II

Anglers, she goes on to say, must make their own "harness,"¹ their rods, their lines of different colours, even their hooks and flies ; and must learn everything about baits for float-fishing and fly-fishing. Her first lesson is how to make a rod in three pieces, a sort of walking-stick rod, but, apparently, about as tall as a quarterstaff when it is closed up. When ready for sport it must be 17 or 18 ft. long, and rather heavy, in spite of the fact that the butt is hollow. The Dame gives a little drawing of its [*invisible*] perfection ; she is delighted with it, or with her careful description of its making. She affirms, indeed : "And thus shall ye make you a rod so preux [*worthy*] that ye may walk therewith ; and there shall no man wyte [*know*] where abouts you go."² It will be light and full nimble to fish with at your lust. . . ."

When tested by a scale of feet, the woodcut is absurd. Even a giant from Brobdingnag would find the butt too thick to grasp ; so I have tried in a drawing to modify the mistakes of proportion, as follows :—



The actual making is a long, tedious job, and to encourage tyros, the Dame gives a drawing of all the tools. Between Michaelmas and Candlemas three sorts of wands are cut :

1. One of hazel, or willow, or asp ; and the asp is not, I believe, mountain ash, as some writers have believed, but one of several species of poplar, especially the *Populus tremula*, whose leaves are set trembling by even the slightest movement of air. This staff, as the Dame calls it, is to be as thick as a man's arm and a fathom and a half long (9 ft.). In due time it will form the butt ; but first it must be dried in a warm oven, then seasoned for a month. Next, it is bound fast with strong cord

¹ When did the word "tackle" displace "harness" ? It occurs in *The Compleat Angler*.

² These words imply that men of her day, if not women also, went about with long walking staffs.

to a form or bench, to prevent it from warping, and in order that a straight and sharp piece of plumber's wire, red-hot at the pointed end, may burn its way through the pithy part and form a hole from end to end. This done, the nether end has to be hollowed with other hot irons, bird-spits, they are called, each of them bigger than its predecessor, because a tapering hole is required to receive the top. Then, after letting it cool for two days, the staff is unbound from the bench or form, and placed in the smoke on the roof of a house till it is dry through and through.¹

2. The top is partly a yard of hazel ; for—

3. It is joined to a length of blackthorn, crab, medlar, or juniper.

These portions of the rod, made even and straight, are dried with the "staff"; then "fretted together" [*bound together*], and fitted into the hole prepared for them in the butt, after much shaving and shaping and polishing. At both ends the butt has hoops of latten or of iron ; and "a pike in the nether end is fastened with a running vice—to take in and out your crop [*top*]." The twisted line—it is made of "VI hairs"—is plaited at one end and looped into a noose with which the top is accommodated. In thinking of this primitive instrument I remember that Walton, rather than have his line broken by a big fish, throws his rod into the water ; and this practice must have been frequent in the fifteenth century.

Dame Bernes goes on to speak about the dyeing of lines :

"First ye must take of a white horse's tail the longest hair and fairest that ye can find, and ever the rounder it be the better it is. Dispart it [*separate it*] into VI parts [*portions*], and every part ye shall colour by himself in divers colours : as yellow, green, brown, tawny, russet, and dusky colours. And for to make a good green colour on your hair ye shall do thus : Take small ale a quart, and put it in a little pan ; put thereto half a pound of alum ; and put thereto your hair, and let it boil softly half an hour. Then take out your hair and let it dry. Then take a pottle of water [*i.e. four pints*] and put it in a pan, and put therein two handfuls of Oldys [*i.e. weld*] or of Wyxene [*i.e. wood-waxen*] ;² press it with a tile stone [*to crush it into a juicy pulp*], and let it boil softly half an hour. And when it is yellow on

¹ Very often roofs had an opening through which smoke passed, rising from a wood fire burning on a central hearth. So I suppose that the fishing-rod was laid across this opening.

² Weld (sometimes known as wild mignonette) is called weld in the earlier version, and also oldys. It is by far the prettiest of the yellow dyes, and most exquisite when applied to silk. Its action on wool is good enough, but, like every natural yellow in the art of dyeing, it fades more than red or blue. As for wood-waxen, *Genista tinctoria*, a leguminous plant of Europe and Russian Asia, it is an ancient rival of weld. Other names for it are woad-waxen, wood-wax, dyer's green-wood, greenweed, woodwosh, and whin. In the fields and hedgerows there are many other yellow dyes : saw-wort, the birch, poplar twigs, osier shoots, broom and heather, their twigs and flowers.

the scum, put therein your hair with half a pound of copperas beaten into powder, and let it boil half a mile way [*i.e. ten minutes*], then set it down and let it cool five or six hours." Next, "take out the hair and dry it, and it is then the finest green that is for the water. And ever the more you put thereto of copperas the better it is, or else instead of it verdigris."



The older version has points of difference. It says, for instance :

"Takesmallalea pottle [*four pints*], and stamp it with III handfulls of walnut leaves, and a quarter of alum, and put them all together in a brass pan, and boil them well together ; and when it is cold, put in your hair that you will have yellow till it be as dark as ye will have it, and then take it out. . . ."¹

Every difference between the two versions has interest, but there is no room here to review them both. I consult the older one carefully, but

¹ This recipe is given later by the printed version.

keep as a rule to the 1496 copy, which is complete, while the other is not. The old dyeing processes continue :

“ Another wise ye may make more brighter green, as thus. Let your hair woad [*blue*] in a woad-vat a light plunket colour, and then seethe him in weld or wyxine, like as I have said, saving ye shall not put thereto either copperas or verdigris.¹

“ For to make your hair yellow, dight it [*dress it*] with alum as I have said before, and after that with weld or wood-waxen, without copperas or verdigris. Another yellow ye shall make thus. Take small ale a pottle and stamp [*crush*] three handful of walnut leaves, and put them together ; and put in your hair till that it be as deep as ye will have it.

“ For to make russet hair : Take strong lye a pint, and half a pound of sote [*soot*], and a little juice of walnut leaves, and a quarter of alum ; and put them all together in a pan and boil them well. And when it is cold, put in your hair till it be as dark as ye will have it.

“ For to make a brown colour : Take a pound of soot and a quart of ale, and seethe them with as many walnut leaves as ye may ; and when they wexe [*grow*] black, set it [*the pan*] from the fire, and put therein your hair, and let it lie still till it [*the hair*] be as brown as you will have it.

“ For to make a tawny colour : Take lime and water and put them together, and also put your hair therein four or five hours. Then take it out and put it in tanner's ooze [*or liquor*] a day : and it shall be as fine a tawny colour as needeth to our purpose. . . .”

The sixth portion of hair is kept white, because it is used undyed in fly-fishing for trout and grayling, and also to make small lines for roach and dace.

When your hair is dyed, in what waters, and in which seasons, are the different colours to be used ?

The green is for all clear water from April till September ; and the yellow also is for clear water from September till November, because it is like the withered weeds and rushes that remain in ponds, lakes, and rivers. Russet-coloured lines will serve through the winter till the end of April, and the brown ones will be useful all the year in dark and still waters. As for the tawny-tinted hair, it is intended for peaty and heathy fishing-places. Clearly, then, anglers of the Middle Ages placed a high value on the art of dyeing as a servant to their own craft.

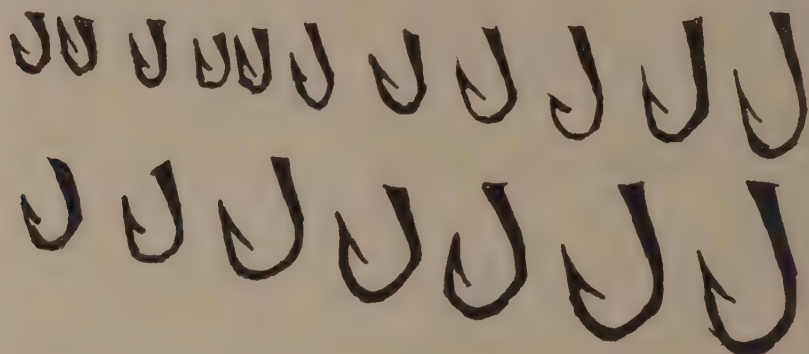
The making of dyed hair into lines is another home craft, and the

¹ The Dame says : “ Lete woode your heer in the woodefatte . . .” Blue is given by woad, which may be called northern indigo ; and the woad-vat used to be as common as the indigo-vat is to-day. The Dame's second process greens the blue.

description given of it is aided by a woodcut, showing a simple little instrument which holds the hair at full length between "clefts" or vices. Great delicacy of hand is needed, and long patient care; for every line is made of short lengths very well tied together. Two knots are mentioned—the water-knot and the duchess-knot.

But, of course, as fishing with an angle means fishing with a hook, Dame Barnes regards the making of steel hooks as the climax of the work to be done. She gives woodcuts of the instruments; another cut shows eighteen different barbed angles; and in a third we see how five hooks are fastened to their leaded lines. For small fish the hooks are forged from the smallest square-headed needles of steel, and for larger fish, from the needles used by embroiderers, tailors, shoemakers, and saddlers. The steel of the shoemaker's awl is chosen for the strongest pike and salmon lines.

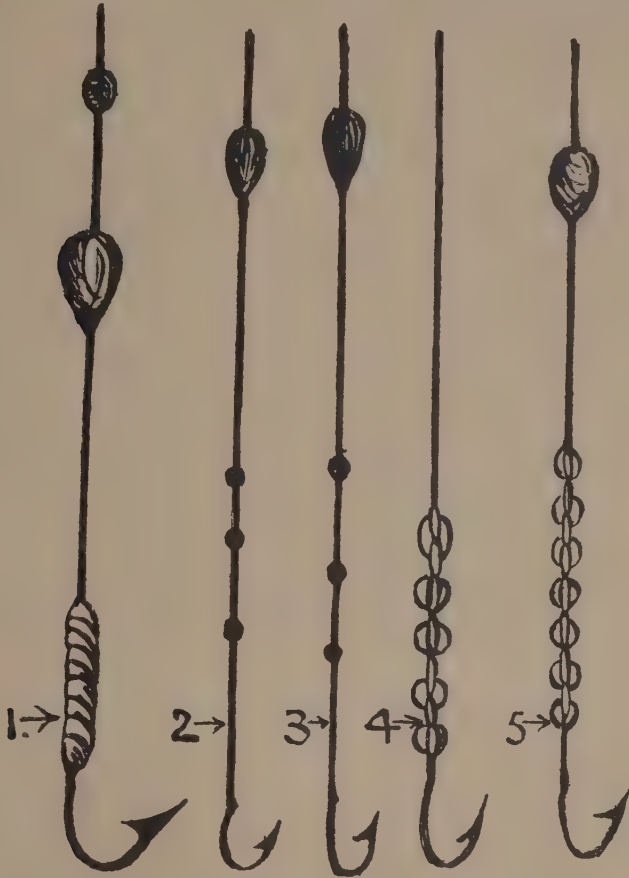
After the many-sized hooks are gradually bent and shaped and barbed



from the annealed steel, the delicate and all-important craft of binding them to the lines with fine red silk is explained; and we are told how many hairs we are to use in lines for different fish. One hair for minnows; two hairs for gudgeon, bleak, and young or growing roach; larger roach and the dace need a line of three hairs, and another hair must be added for perch, flounders, and young bream. Older bream, like eels, tench, and young chub, raise the number of hairs to six, while nine are needed when we fish for large chub, barbel, grayling, and the smaller trout. As many as fifteen hairs are weaved into a salmon line, and a dozen for large trout. There is no lack of casts, then, in Dame Barnes' angling; and she has a rather awed respect for the melancholy, solitary, and voracious pike. To him she gives the largest hook, and prepares for him a line of brown pack thread

made like the chalk lines which are used in her time, and now, for marking straight lines on boards or on other materials. She fears the pike's teeth, and protects a part of her line with wire.

Only one of her casts is without a float ; it is the ground line that lies



1. Pike line with a float, and a wired cork near the hook.
2. Float line for perch and tench.
3. A similar float line.
4. Line without a float for bottom-fishing.
5. The "running" ground line.

along the bottom, weighted with from ten to twenty smooth and rounded pieces of lead. There is another ground line, with eight leads all in line, called the running-ground line ; it has a float very carefully shaped into a pointed oval.

All of the floats are shaped from the best cork, and their "nether-end" is "specially sharp." In a line of one hair the float is as wee as a pea; in one of two hairs, no bigger than a bean; and in one of a dozen hairs, let it have the size of a walnut. The Dame sets great store by proportion. Indeed, she delights in minute technical explanation. In this quality she is even nearer to Beckford than she is to her great-great-grandson Walton, who seldom fails to rise from technique into pastoral poetry.

Summing up this part of the treatise, specialists of to-day note that the lines are too thick, but that the way in which they are fastened to the hooks is excellent, and also quite modern. This technical fact is noted by Mr. John Waller Hills (*A History of Fly-Fishing for Trout*, 1921, pp. 21-22). The treatise recommends red silk, single for small hooks, double for the large ones, *and never twisted*. Mr. Hills notes also that the rod, "which in the picture looks like an ungainly pole, is really light and flexible: a hollow butt, a springy middle joint of hazel, and a light yet tough top made up something which would throw a fly uncommonly well."

Twenty-nine years ago Mr. R. B. Marston expressed similar opinions in *Walton and some Earlier Writers on Fish and Fishing*. Note also that some experts in the art of dyeing have read this treatise with much interest. This point is not unimportant, for an early book on *The Whole Art of Dyeing*, printed in 1705 by William Pearson, and sold by James Nutt, was advertised as a translation from the German language. As a consequence, we have reason to note all that can be collected about early English methods of dyeing.

III

There are six ways of angling in this charming manual of the Middle Ages.

1. At the ground for trout and other fish.
2. At the ground in pools and under the arches of bridges.
3. With a float for fish of every sort.
4. With a minnow for trout, your line to have neither lead nor float.
5. "... running in the same wise for roach and dace, with a line of one or two hairs and a fly."
6. "With a dubbed hook [*i.e.* a hook dressed with an artificial fly] for trout and grayling."

"And the first and principal point of angling, keep you ever from the water and from the sight of fish, either far on the land or else behind a bush,

that the fish see you not. For if they do, they will not bite. Also look that ye shadow not the water as much as ye may ; it is that thing that will soon fray [*alarm*] the fish ; and if a fish be afraid he will not bite long after. For all manner of fish that feed by the ground, you shall angle for them to the bottom, so that your hooks shall run or lie on the ground. And for all other fish that feed above, ye shall angle to them in the middle of the water [*half-way down*], or somedea! beneath or somedea! above [*that point*]. . . .”

The Dame lays it down as a maxim that the smaller a fish is the nearer he swims to the surface, while the big and biggest live near the bottom.

Her third point is a warning :

“ When the fish bite, see that you be not too hasty to smite ¹ nor too late, for you must abide till you suppose that the bait be far in the mouth of the fish ; then abide no longer. And this is for the ground. And for the float : when ye see it pulled softly under the water, or else carried upon the water softly, then smite [*strike*] ; and look that you never oversmite the strength of your line for breaking. And if it fortune you to smite a great fish with a small harness [*i.e. line and hook*], then ye must lead him [*control him, play him*] in the water, and labour him there till he be drowned or overcome.² Then take him as well as ye can or may ; and ever beware that ye hold not over the strength of your line. And as much as ye may, let him not come out of your line’s end straight from you, but keep him ever under the rod, and evermore hold him straight, so that your line may sustain and bear his leaps and his plunges with the help of your crop [*top*] and of your hand.” ³

After this good advice, the book tells us in what places we are to throw our lines. In pools, or in any other standing water, choose those places where there is some depth ; but there is no great choice here, the Dame adds, for a pond “ is but a prison for fish, and they live for the more part in hunger like prisoners ; and therefore it is the less mastery to take them. But in a river ye shall angle in every place where it is deep and clear by the ground : as gravel or clay without mud or weeds ” ; or in sheltered places, such as hollow banks, or near great roots of trees, or near long and thick weeds where the fish may hide themselves at certain times. . . . The Dame adds that it is good to angle in deep, stiff streams, near falls of

¹ This use of the verb *to smite* is noteworthy. When was it first displaced by *to strike* ?

² The expression “ *lead him in the water* ” implies—or seems to imply—that the angler is to go from the bankside into the water in order to ease the strain as much as possible. Even in Walton’s time anglers do not seem to have waded much.

³ Cheetham’s *The Angler’s Vade Mecum* (1681) repeated this tactical instruction. In Andrew Lang’s copy of the *Vade Mecum* an old angler had added, in manuscript, “ And hale him not too near the top of the water, lest in flaskering he break ye line. . . . ” A delightfully expressive verb—“ to flasket ” on the top of the water, like hooked sea trout !

water, and in weirs, flood-gates, and mill-pools; and also where the water resteth by the bank, and where the stream runneth nigh thereby, and is deep, and clear by the ground. Other places are made known by the fish themselves when they rise to the surface at feeding time and are seen.

The book moves on to the time of day, and we see here, as elsewhere, that writers on angling should quote more from Dame Bernes, and less from Walton. From the beginning of May till it be September, we are told, the best time to fish is early in the morning, from four till eight o'clock. In the afternoon, "from four of the clock until eight of the clock, but not so good as in the morning." . . . And "a dark day is much better to angle in than a clear day."

"From the beginning of September to the end of April, spare no time of the day. . . ." Many fish in pools "will bite but in noontide; and if ye see any time of the day the trout or the grayling leap, angle to him with a dub according to the same month." Again, "where the water ebbeth and floweth the fish will bite in some places at the ebb, and at some places at the flood, after that they have been resting behind piles or arches of bridges, and other such places."

"As I have said before," the Dame continues, it is good to fish "in a dark lowering day when the wind bloweth softly." In the summer season, when it is burning hot, angling is no good, she affirms. From September till April, on a fair sunny day, it is right good to angle. But if the wind in that season has any touch of the East in it, the weather then is bad. And we are warned against high wind, and hail, snow, thunder, lightning, and oppressive sultry weather.

Anglers, again, have to encounter a dozen impediments, apart from some others that may happen casually. In these the Dame sums up twelve points in her teaching. So I will give only one quotation: "The west and north winds be good, but the south is best."

Baits come next in her instruction, and she is certain that all the other necessary things in fishing are dependent upon what we use to lure the fish, because, as she remarks quaintly, we cannot without a bait get a hook into a fish's mouth.

Her artificial flies we have seen already (pp. 238, 239), and some of her remarks on live bait are as unpleasant as some of Walton's. There is Walton's famous, or infamous, description of the use of frogs as live bait, ending thus: "and, in so doing, use him as though you loved him, that is, harm him as little as you may possibly, that he may live the longer. . . ." Walton

is baiting a ledger-hook for pike-fishing ; and custom betrays Dame Bernes also into cruelty when she speaks of live bait for pike. But her words are less graphic than Walton's, and thus less at odds with the idealism that she and he find in their sport. She says briefly : " Take a frog and put it on your hook at the neck between the skin and the body on the back ; put on a float a yard therefrom, and cast it where the pike haunteth, and ye shall have him." Again, " take the same bait, and put it in asafetida, and cast it in the water with a cord and a cork, and ye shall not fail to have him. And if ye list to have a good sport, then tie the cord to a goose foot, and ye shall see good hauling where the goose or the pike shall have the better. . . ." Walton, too, says, in his chapter on the Pike : " Or these live baits may make sport, being tied about the body or wings of a goose or duck, and she chased over a pond."

Many writers, like Washington Irving and Andrew Lang, have deeply regretted these parts of Walton's masterpiece, and Leigh Hunt detested them so much that he said of Walton : " He looks like a pike, dressed in broadcloth instead of butter." Even Lang said : " A bait-fisher *may* be a good man, as Izaak was, but it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle." Yet, of course, habit has always prevented men from seeing the cruelties which customs have had in them, and live baits have belonged inevitably to the first periods of the evolution of angling.

IV

Dame Bernes speaks first of the salmon, " because it is the most stately fish that any man can angle to in fresh water."

" The salmon is ' a gentyll ' fish, but he is cumbrous for to take. For commonly he is but in deep places of great rivers. And for the most part he holdeth the middle of it [*of a river*], that a man may not come at him. And he is in season from March unto Michaelmas ; in which season ye shall angle to him with these baits when ye may get them. First with a red worm in the beginning and ending of the season, and also with a bob [*grub, larva of fly or beetle*] that breedeth in a dunghill. And specially with a sovereign bait that breedeth on a water dock." The salmon " biteth not at the ground, but at the float. Also ye may take him—but it is seldom seen—with a dubbe [*artificial fly*] at such a time as when he leapeth, in like form and manner as ye do take a trout or a grayling. And these baits be well-proved baits of a salmon."

As for the trout, it is praised as a dainty fish and a right fervent biter ;

in season from March till Michaelmas ; fond of clear water and a clean gravelly bottom. " Ye may angle to him all times with a ground line, lying or running, except in leaping time, and then with a dubbe." A running ground line is for early morning fishing ; a float line should be used in the day. In March the minnow is a good bait, and your line is to have neither float nor lead. The minnow is to be moved up and down in the stream till a trout has taken it. In the same month angle on a ground line " with a red worm for the most sure." " In April, take the same baits ; also Inneba [*the river lamprey*], otherwise named VII eyes. Also the canker [*a caterpillar, probably also a grub or maggot*]*—the canker that breedeth in a great tree, and the red snail.*" The stone fly is recommended for May, so is the bob under cow dung ; silkworms also are mentioned, and " the bait that breedeth on a fern leaf."¹ In June, take a red worm and nip off the head, and put him on your hook over a codworm [*cade or caddis worm, also called cod-bait*].² In July, use the great red worm and the codworm together. In August, choose a flesh fly and a great red worm, with some bacon fat, and bind them about your hook. " In September, take the red worm and the minnow." These baits are good also in October ; indeed, " they be special for the trout all times of the year.

" From April till September the trout leapeth, then angle to him with a dubbed hook according to the month. . . ."

The grayling is praised as " a delicious fish to man's mouth ; and ye may take him as ye do the trout." In March and April angle for him with red worm ; in May, with the green worm, a little breyled [*ringed*] worm, the dock canker, and the hawthorn worm. For June there is the bait that breeds under the bark of an oak ; and for July the bait that is found on a fern leaf. Or you may put a red worm, after its head has been nipped off, over a codworm. " In August the red worm," or " a dock worm, and all the year after a red worm."

Dame Bernes writes more about barbel than about grayling, one reason being that she is afraid of this fish, describing the barbel as " a queasy meat and perilous for man's body," likely to make us feverish ; " and if he be eaten raw,³ he may be cause of man's death, which hath oft been seen." The bait recommended for spring and summer is cheese. " Take fair fresh cheese and lay it on a board, and cut it in small square pieces of the length of

¹ The older version says " on a pyne tre lefe."

² Particular kinds of caddis worms are known as the piper, cock-spur, and ruff-coat.

³ *Raw.* In Roumania to this day raw salmon is a delicacy.

your hook ; take then a candle and burn it on the end at the point of your hook till it be yellow ; and then bind it on your hook with fletcher's silk " [*the silk used by arrow-makers*], and make it rough like a welbede [*a woodlouse, sometimes also called millepede*]. In May, June, July, worms and maggots are to be used, as in grayling sport ; while—

" in August and for all the year, take the tallow of a sheep and soft cheese, of each alike much [*the same quantity*], and a little honey, and grind or stamp them together long, and temper it till it be tough ; and put thereto flour a little, and make it on [*into*] small pellets. And it is a good bait to angle with at the ground. And look that it sink in the water, or else it is not good to this purpose. . . ."

Little is said about the carp, then a rare fish in England, *almost* unknown to anglers.

" He is an evil fish to take, for he is so strong enarmed in the mouth that no weak harness may hold him. And as touching his baits, I have but little knowledge of it, and me were loath to write more than I know and have proved. But well I wot that the red worm and the minnow be good baits for him at all times, as I have heard say of persons credible, and also found written in books of credence."

Note well the transparent honesty of this good quotation, because the Dame's assailants—all men, knights of the most recent chivalry—never quote it fully, because they wish to say that the author of the *Treatise* "disclaims originality." I am not joking. Does Montaigne "disclaim originality" when he ransacks the classics, and withholds references, in order that his detractors "may give a stab to Plutarch, or a fillip on the nose to Seneca"? Or is William Shakespeare unoriginal when he captures plots? True genius has ever been either a creative borrower, or a colonizing buccaneer. Hence we should be glad to know that our first printed treatise on fishing is not one wholly of personal experiences.

Walton also refers to the rarity of carp in early England, but, instead of referring to the first printed treatise on fishing for his evidence, he says :

" It is said, they were brought hither by one Mr. Mascal, a gentleman that then lived at Plumstead in Sussex, a county that abounds more with this fish than any in this nation. . . . Doubtless there was a time, about a hundred or a few more years ago, when there were no Carps in England, as may seem to be affirmed by Sir Richard Baker, in whose Chronicle you may find these verses :

" Hops and turkies, carps and beer,
Came into England all in a year."

But Dame Bernes does not confirm these verses, for she does not say that *no* carps were to be found in English waters of her day. She says plainly : " but there be but few in England, and therefore I write the less of them. . . ."

Students will find also in this treatise the mediæval attitude towards chub, bream, tench, perch, roach, dace, bleak, ruff, flounders, gudgeon, minnows, and eels. All of this matter influenced Walton, perhaps at second hand, for we cannot say for certain that he ever studied the earliest of his literary forerunners. The last remark on baits, in this fifteenth-century booklet, has been repeated a great many times since it was printed, generally without reference to its source :

" For baits for great fish keep specially this rule. When ye have taken a great fish, undo the maw, and what ye find therein make that your bait, for it is best."

Last of all, though our country owns one of the first printed treatises on freshwater fishing, yet many anglers of to-day seem to be not in the least proud. Some of them have gone so far as to give its authorship to its printer, Wynkyn de Worde, whose real name was Jan van Wynkyn, and whose birthplace was the town of Worth, in Alsace. It is astonishing that any person should connect Wynkyn with English authorship, because his characteristics as a printer and stationer are noted in a familiar work of Reference, *The Dictionary of National Biography*. As a man of business he was very enterprising, but, " unlike Caxton, he does not appear to have taken any interest in the literary side of his work, and we cannot point to a single book among the many hundreds which he issued as being translated or edited by himself." This being so, let us see what has been said recently in print about Dame Bernes :

" It is affirmed that she, if there ever was such a she, never wrote a word of her treatise, but that it was all a concoction of Wynkyn de Worde. But just why, if it were so, he chose to disguise his identity in this feminine camouflage, why he desired a disguise for his identity at all, and why this particular disguise rather than another—all these are old and deep mysteries.¹ Had he the double personality, we will not say of Jekyll and Hyde, but perhaps of William Sharp and Fiona Macleod ? And for what purposes ? "

Read what is known about Wynkyn de Worde, and read also the only MS. of the fishing treatise that has come down to us. Experts have fixed the date of its transcription as probably between 1430-1450, and thus a very considerable time before Wynkyn came to England, and began

¹ Not so. They are new and shallow, not old and deep.

to serve his apprenticeship in the office of William Caxton. According to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, Wynkyn probably accompanied Caxton from Bruges in 1476. As an alien he could not hold real estate in England, and for this reason his English wife, Elizabeth, on November 4th, 1480, entered her name in the rent-roll of Westminster Abbey as holding a tenement in Westminster from the dean and chapter. Six years later the first edition of *The Boke of St. Albans* was published, with the name of Dame Barnes set up in printer's type for the first time. Wynkyn lived on till about 1534, because his will was made in this year, and it was proved on January 19th, 1535, his executors being James Gaver and John Byddell.

Now, consider these dates. There are fifty-eight years between the probable date of Wynkyn's arrival in England (1476), and the making of his will (1534); and since he served Caxton as an apprentice, we may safely believe he was still a young man, not more than twenty-five, when he came to London.

Not even the wildest guessing can assume that Wynkyn's arrival in England may have been as early as the date given by experts to the only known transcription of our earliest treatise on fishing (1430-1450). In 1450 Caxton himself was only about twenty-eight, and he did not set up his first press at Westminster till 1470.

Still, it is characteristic of our countrymen to undervalue ridiculously their mediæval relics. If France owned one of the first printed booklets on fishing, no French writer on sport would say as a mere guess that "it was all a concoction" by a foreign printer. He would see that the work is not a "concoction," but a genuine piece of early composition, full of historic interest; and he would compare its paragraphs with later printed works in order to note its influence. Only convincing evidence would enable him to believe that a foreign printer in France, who wrote nothing else afterwards, managed somehow in a treatise on fishing to mimic the literary French of the fifteenth century.

Note also that John Bale, in 1534, was thirty-nine years old, since he was born in 1495; thus he had time enough to consult Wynkyn by letter, if not in conversation. Yet there are writers who accuse him, and also Burton and Chauncy, of compiling "a mendacious biography" for "a mythical lady."

I end my book, then, with a plea: that our early works on fishing should be read with sympathy. There is no need to speak of "the turgid bombast of Franck," for instance, for Franck did his best as a writer; he was a practical

angler, especially for salmon, and his remarks on Walton bring us intimately in touch with candour from a Cromwellian soldier, who was a firm admirer of the great Montrose. All of these early writers have minds of their own, voices of their own, and they help to make us at ease in their own times, among the rivalries and the contests of daily life. It matters not whether we believe in Dame Bernes, or whether we disbelieve in her, for the oldest known treatise on English fishing lives on and on, a work to be read and re-read. Some author of the fifteenth century not only speaks to us, but strives also to handle the difficult English language. What more do we need, then ?

* * * * *

Our journey having ended, let us look back upon the five centuries through which we have made our way as well as we can. What after-reflections are we to note ?

Many a person complains about the mists of antiquity, though the only mists we need fear are those which are caused by the illusions and delusions of our own day and generation. These are present in every art, and also in the reading of history, as in our frequent failure to acknowledge what we owe to our forbears. As Walton grew into a masterpiece of literary art because he took pride in developing a school of ideas, and also of technical methods, so a few men of genius during our own times, like Mr. J. S. Sargent and the late Charles Furse, have stored a good deal of the past within their originality ; just as varying big rivers, by receiving enough waters from their tributaries, have retained the full measure of their attainable strength, and have flowed on undiminished in size and worth.

Two phases of angling in art have had a stronger evolution than the rest. One of them is that line of portraiture which we have followed back to the old panel representing Dr. Nowel. The other is the illustration of printed books on sports, which had its beginning four hundred and thirty-seven years ago, in the first edition of *The Booke of St. Albans*. Limits of space have enabled us only to glance at this part of an immense subject, a part which has collected so many prints of different sorts that they are almost innumerable. A volume on Walton's Illustrators alone would occupy as much space as the present study. A new edition of *The Compleat Angler*, with carefully chosen plates from all of its 165 editions, would be a very valuable memento of changing art from to-day back to 1653.

It appears to me, again, that the good example set by Francis Barlow as a landscapist fond of fish and fishing has not been followed by his after-comers

with enough courage and ability. True, I have failed to get for reproduction a good many important paintings, some old, some new. Nevertheless, it would be unfair to judge any phase of historic art by showing only its very uncommon productions, cream from the milk of its enterprise. To be fair to it, and to its many students, we should keep all cream in the milk, remembering that progress in art includes the improvement made by ordinary craftsmen. This attitude towards fairness in history I have wished to illustrate in this book, while perceiving that angling landscapes after Barlow's time have been too frequently the day-by-day work of minor painters, men assailed by unceasing money troubles. Yet some of the minor men loved paint and the countrysides of art more sincerely than certain Forsyte painters who signed R.A. after their names, and obtained very big prices for their work, like Witherington. Do you not prefer the honest, sturdy provincialism of such a man as W. Jones, for instance?

When an immense subject appears for the first time in a book, untiring research is greatly handicapped. But I have done my best, aided by many friends, whose names I give at the beginning of this study. Those who have aided me most often, and most heartily, are Mrs. Coutts Michie, Mrs. Briggs, Mr. A. N. Gilbey, Mr. M. H. Spielmann, Sir Frederick Macmillan, who has lent four blocks after drawings by the late Hugh Thomson, Mr. Alec McCulloch, Mr. H. T. Sheringham, Major Oswald Magniac, General Cowie, Mr. Martin Hardie, Mr. C. Reginald Grundy, Mr. Mark W. Hall, Mr. John Murray, Messrs. Dent, Mr. T. C. F. Brothie, of the Glasgow Art Galleries and Museums, Mr. D. Y. Cameron, R.A., Mr. Lamorna Birch, Mr. William Walls, R.S.A., Mr. W. T. Spencer, Mr. David C. Bolton, Mr. F. Bathurst, Mr. G. M. Fraser, of the Public Library, Aberdeen, Mr. D. Croal Thomson, The Print Room of the British Museum, and the many newspapers—about seventy-five in all—that have published open letters of search and research. But, of course, the author is responsible for all opinions, and criticisms, and for all errors.





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 Chatto, W. A., who wrote under the name P. Fisher, Esq., *The Angler's Souvenir*, London, 1835. Illustrations by H. Beckwith and F. W. Topham (1808-1877). Pages are surrounded with wood-cut borders.
- Chauncy, Sir Henry, 1632-1714.. 247, 248, 249
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 Chetham, or Cheetham, James, writer on fishing. *The Angler's Vade Mecum*, London, 1681. Later editions also, 207, 261.
 Chitty, Edward, "Theophilus South," writer on fishing. *The Fly-Fisher's Text Book*, London, 1841. And other editions. Illustrated by F. R. Lee, and others, 101, 109, 169
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 Cliffe, Charles Frederick, *The Book of South Wales*, London, 1848; *The Book of North Wales*, London, 1851.
 Coad, J., *Angling Excursions of Gregory Green-drake, Esq., in the Counties of Wicklow, Meath, etc.* Fourth edition, Dublin, 1833.
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 Cockle, Mrs., *The Fishes Grand Gala*... London, 1808, 24 mo. A comic poem with several plates.
 Cole, Ralph, *The Young Angler's Pocket Companion*, 1795.
 Cole, Vicat, R.A., 1833-1893.. 77
 Collins, William, R.A., 1788-1847.. 41, 47, 97, 104. His picture of "Minnow Catchers" is in the Bury Art Gallery.
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 Colquhoun, John, writer on fishing. *The Moor and the Loch*, Edinburgh, 1840, and other editions, 195
Compleat Angler, The, by Izaak Walton; published for the first time in 1653. Looking back from the present day, we find that about 165 editions or issues have been brought out, showing that Walton's best work has become a national custom. The editors, looking back upon them from to-day, number twenty-four, as follows:—
 Richard Le Gallienne. 5 editions.
 R. B. Marston. 3 "

Andrew Lang . . . 5 editions.
Henry Morley . . . 5 "
Austin Dobson . . . 4 "
Major . . . 18 "
J. Buchan . . . 3 "
Sir Harris Nicolas . . . 5 "
George A. B. Dewar . . . 1 edition,
and very fine (1902).
C. H. Dick . . . 1 edition.
F. G. Johnson . . . 1 "
J. E. Harting . . . 1 "
Hawkins and Ellis . . . 1 "
G. Christopher Davies . . . 4 editions.
James Russell Lowell . . . 4 "
Bethune . . . 8 "
Edward Fitzgibbon
[*"Ephemera"*] . . . 7 "
J. Alfred . . . 2 "
E. Jesse . . . 4 "
Hawkins and James
Rennie . . . 15 "
Hawkins . . . 15 "
Moses Browne . . . 4 "
Thomson and Major . . . 3 "
Walton himself . . . 6¹ "

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221; James Inskipp, 98, 99; Thomas
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G. E. Lodge, 98; John Linnell, 98;
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Compleat Angler, The, extra-illustrated. About
1825, Sotherby sold by auction for
120 guineas a copy containing upwards
of 800 drawings and etchings,
engravings, etc., many of which were
by John Scott. The late Sir Walter
Gilbey purchased a copy of Bagster's
edition, 1808, on the largest paper,
containing 254 plates and drawings,
beautifully bound by Thomas Gosden,
and with a note in his handwriting
on the flyleaf, that the bands of the

book were made with wood that
belonged to Cotton's Fishing House.

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Coombe, William, "*Dr. Syntax*," 1741-1823..
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Cooper, A. D., angling illustrator, 75

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Cooper, A. W., Victorian artist and angler, 75

Cooper, Davis, Victorian painter of fishing
subjects of some interest.

Cooper, T. Sidney, R.A., 1803-1902..76

Copley, John Singleton, R.A., 1737-1815..183

Coquet-Dale Fishing Songs, The. Now first
collected and edited by a north country
angler. Edinburgh, Blackwood, 1852.

Corbould, Richard, 1757-1831..110

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Cotman, John Sell, Norwich School, 1782-1842..
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Cotman, Miles Edmund, 1811-1858..115

Cotton, Charles, Walton's friend, 1630-1687;
author of the so-called second part of
The Compleat Angler, London, 1676;
and other editions, 159, 161, 200, 201,
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Couch, Jonathan, *History of Fishes*, 1862..80

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Cowie, General, 170, 269

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Cozens, John Robert, great painter in water-
colours, 1752-1799; a few incidental
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Luke, painter, c. 1660-1717..116

Craft, Percy R., Victorian angler and artist.

Crawhall, Joseph, died May 24th, 1913, his
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Creel, first mentioned by Dennys, 1613.

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¹ There are thirty-three unedited reprints. The *smallest* Walton was brought out by the Oxford Uni-
versity Press in 1900; it measures 1½ in. by 2½ in. The best American edition is the Bethune of 1847.
The finest English edition is the Winchester, 1902, edited by Dewar, with many original etchings by D. Y.
Cameron and William Strang, and an essay by Sir Edward Grey, Bart.

- Crescenze, Pietro de, his fourteenth or fifteenth-century manuscript on vellum in the Fearing Collection. Its ninth and tenth books relate to animals, fishing, etc. Title: *Petri Crescentii Civis Bononie Curialium Commodarum Libri xii, sive de omnibus agriculturæ partibus et de plantarum animaliumque natura et utilitate*.
- Crescenze, Pietro de. *Ruralium Commodorum libri duodecim finiunt feliciter per Johannem Schuszler ciuem Augustensem impressi*, 1471. Folio.—A first edition copy in the Fearing Collection, which has also a copy each of translations into Italian, French, and German.
- Creswick, Thomas, R.A., 1811-1869..41, 73, 104; an angling picture by him and W. P. Frith, R.A., "The River Tees at Wycliffe," is in the Pandeli Ralli Collection. In 1844, Creswick helped John Absolon to illustrate *The Compleat Angler*.
- Crewe, Marquis of, 198
- Cristall, Joshua, R.W.S., 1767-1847..47
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- Cullin, J. R., Victorian angler and artist, 75
- Custom and cruelty, 263
- D
- DADD, FRANK, R.I., 1851-1880, and salmon-spearing, 82
- Dagley, R., *Death's Doings*, prose and verse, also thirty plates designed and etched by R. Dagley. London, Andrews. No date. A second edition, with illustrations coloured by hand. Contains: *The Angler*, a poem, and a plate, "Death and the Angler." *Fearing Collection*.
- Daily Graphic*, The, 72
- Danby, Francis, A.R.A., c. 1793-1861..97
- Dance, Charles, *Izaak Walton, a Drama*, 1839..222
- Daniell, Thomas, R.A., 1749-1840..188, 190
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- Daumier, Honoré, 1808-1879..137
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- David, S., 126
- Davies, G. Christopher, *Rivers and Broads of Norfolk and Suffolk*. Also an editor of *Walton's Angler*.
- Davis, Henry W. B., R.A., 1833-1914..76, 77
- Davy, Sir Humphry, 1778-1829, *Salmonia, or Days of Fly-Fishing*, London, 1828; and other editions, 195
- Dawe, Philip, engraver, and Morland, 177
- Dayes, Edward, 1763-1804..141, 142
- Dean, J., engraver, and Morland, 177
- De Louthembourg, P. J., R.A., 1740-1812.
- Denison, Alfred, translator of *The Earliest Known Book on Fowling and Fishing*, written originally in Flemish, and printed at Antwerp in the year 1492; a literal translation by Denison, privately printed, 1872, 4to. Only twenty-five copies were printed of this translation.
- Dennys, John, *The Secrets of Angling*, London, 1613, 8vo.; and other editions—a fine angling poem. It gives a good description of contemporary methods, and contains the first mention of wicker creels, rods wholly of cane, and the landing net.
- Dent & Co., Messrs., publishers, 6, 269
- Denyer, Isaac Van, 205
- Devis, Arthur, senior, 1708-1787..182, 183, 184, 185, 186
- Devis, Arthur William, 1763-1822..186
- Devis, Anthony T., 1729-1817..186
- De Wint, Peter, 1784-1849..97, 111, 112, 167
- Dick, Capt. St. John, *Flies and Fly-Fishing for White and Brown Trout, etc.*, London, 1875. Period book.
- Dickens, Charles, 1812-1870..86, 91, 109, 125, 126, 174
- Dictionary of National Biography*, 101, 108, 125, 198, 202, 266, 267
- Dighton, R., 135
- Disraeli, Benjamin, 1804-1881..171
- Dixon, Henry, "The Druid," 6, 10
- Docharty, James, A.R.S.A., 1829-1878..80. Also plate facing p. 6.
- Don Malloch, a ghillie, 34, 39
- Doyle, John, 1797-1868..85, 129, 174. Also plate facing p. 86.
- Doyle, Richard, 1824-1883..85
- Drake, E. T. Tyrwhitt, 204
- "Drinkwater, Henry," a book of fishing songs by him, set to music by Eugene Barrett.
- "Druid, The," Henry Dixon, 6, 10
- Dry Fly-Fishing, 63, 71.¹

¹ Its very slow evolution began, apparently, in the days of Leonard Mascall, who, in 1590, wrote of making flies upon the hook "lapt about with corke." This would enable them to float. He wrote also of certain flies which were to be used "afloat on the water," notably the Ruddy Fly, known to-day as the Red Spinner. There are passages in Thomas Barker, and also in Robert Boyle, which refer to flies that

- Du Maurier, George Louis Palmella Busson, 1831-1896..88, 90
 Duncan, Edward, R.W.S., 1804-1882..101. *See* illustrations.
 Dunthorne Gallery, 52
 Durand, G., 85
 Durnford, Rev. Richard, *Fishing Diary*, useful.
 Dyce, William, R.A., 1806-1864, painted a picture entitled, "George Herbert at Bemerton," accompanied by Izaak Walton, who was seated, and fishing; but some one told Dyce, as a joke, that Herbert and Walton were not contemporaries, and that he must take out one or the other. Walton was painted out, "But," said Dyce, "I'm damned if I'll take out his basket, it has given me so much trouble to paint!" This picture is in the Guildhall, but is the story true? George Herbert and Walton were born in the same year, 1593, and were contemporaries till 1632, when Herbert died.
 Dyeing methods for lines, early, 207, 255, 256, 257, 258

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- EARL, GEORGE, 78. Goupil published three prints after Earl: "Otter Hunting," and two of salmon fishing.
 East, Sir Alfred, R.A., P.R.B.A., 1849-1913..74
 Edmonds, Harfield H., and Lee, Norman N., *Brook and River Trouting*, Bradford, 1916; useful.
 Edridge, Henry, A.R.A., 1769-1821..169. Some incidental angling in his landscapes.
 Edwards, Edwin, 1825-1879..75
 Edwards, Lionel, 70, 71, 174
 Egerton, D. T., sporting artist, early nineteenth century. *See The Annals of Sporting*, for 1822, July to December, where he is represented by a plate of "Gudgeon Raking."
 Ellacombe, Rev. H. N., Shakespeare as an Angler, 1883.

- Elliott, William, engraver, 139, 141
 Ellis, G. W. H., his list of Angling Books, 4
 Elmer, Stephen, A.R.A., c. 1717-1796..126
 Ephemera. *See* Fitzgibbon, Edward.
 Estienne, Charles, *L'Agriculture et Maison Rustique*, Paris, 1564, 1565; London, 1616; and other editions.
 Etty, William, R.A., 1787-1849..68, 97
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- FAIRFAX, THOMAS, *The Complete Sportsman*, London, 1760. Period book.
Fallacies of Hope, poem by J. M. W. Turner, 117, 205
 Farington's *Diary*, 182, 186, 188, 192
 Farington, Joseph, R.A., 1747-1821..46, 170, 182
 Farington, Joseph, and "The Fishing Party," in the Victoria Art Gallery, Bath, 186-188. *See also* 189, 190, for a somewhat similar picture in the A. N. Gilbey Collection.
 Farquharson, David, A.R.A., 1839-1907..42, 43, 80
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 Fearing, Daniel B., the late, great American collector, whose library comprised some 10,000 volumes dealing with fish and fishing, directly or indirectly.
 Fearing, Daniel B., the late, 5, 80, 86, 110, 126, 202
 Fedden, Romilly, his *Golden Days from the Fishing-Log of a Painter in Brittany*, 25
 Feller, Frank, angling illustrator, 72
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 Finberg, A. J., his book on Turner's Sketches and Drawings, 119
 Finberg, A. J., and Mrs. Finberg, Cotswold Gallery, London, 118
 Findlay, W., a little-known painter. Mr. H. T. Sheringham has a fishing picture by him.

float best, Barker recommending hog's wool, which swims well, and shines brilliantly in the water. Boyle loved a fly that kept his hook swimming, while many other anglers preferred flies that sank. But the next stage in the gradual evolution did not begin till George Scotcher in his *Fly-Fisher's Legacy*, c. 1800, mentioned flies that kill because they float. Pulman, between 1841 and 1851, carried his first views on buoyant flies into the advice, "Let a *dry* fly be substituted for the wet one, the line switched a few times through the air to throw off its super-abundant moisture, a judicious cast made just above the rising fish, and the fly allowed to float towards and over them [the fish], and the chances are ten to one that it will be seized as readily as the living insect." Still, customs are very hard to alter, and we find no mention of dry flies in the *Chronicles of the Houghton Fishing Club* from 1822 to 1908. There is a good review of the Dry Fly in Mr. J. W. Hills' book, 1921, *A History of Fly-Fishing for Trout*.

- Fish and fishing in the Middle Ages. *See* Chapters XI and XII.
- Fish, Still-Life, and Impressionism, 59, 60, 81, 80
- Fisherman's Magazine*, edited by Cholmondeley Pennell, 1864, 1865; a useful work.
- Fishing at Home and Abroad*, 31
- Fishing at night, 231. *See also* table of illustrations.
- Fishing, a Diagnosis*, by H. T. Sheringham, and G. E. Studdy, 87
- Fishing-rod, J. M. W. Turner's, 121
- Fitzgerald, M., angling illustrator, 72
- Fitzgibbon, Edward (*Ephemeris*), *Handbook of Angling*, London, 1853; *Book of the Salmon*, London, 1850
- Fletcher, Phineas, *Piscatory Eclogues*, Edin., 1771.
- Fly-Fishers, Early, 215, 216, 217, 238, 239, 263, 264
- Fly-making, 157, 158, 159, 160, 162, 163, 164, 169, 195, 224, 238, 229
- Forbes, Stanhope G., 42
- Fores, Messrs., 41, Piccadilly, London, 127
- Forster, C., 75
- Fox, Augustus, engraver, 98
- "Foz," i.e. S. W. Fores, cartoonist, 127
- Francia, F. L. T., 1772-1839. 141, 142
- Francis, Francis, writer on fishing, *A Book on Angling*, London, 1867, 8vo.; and other editions.
- Francis, Francis, 38, 250
- Franck, Richard, Puritan soldier, and salmon fisher, *Northern Memoirs*, 1694, 8vo. The Shakespearian Holofernes of Fly-Fishing.
- Franck, Richard, 169, 203, 213, 214, 234
- Franck, Richard, and Walton, 215, 216, 217, 224
- Frankland, Sir Robert, Bart., 1784-1849. 142, 143, 144, 174
- Fraser, Alexander, R.S.A., 1828-1899. 14. I have failed to find his angling pictures, as, for example, his "Salmon Trap on a Welsh River" (1858), "A Fishing Day in Loch Awe" (1867), and "Trout Stream in the West Highlands" (1878).
- Frazers of Lovat; how they cooked salmon alive, 168, 169
- French angling humour, unintended, 88
- French art: its world-wide influence, 48, 94, 95, 96
- French critics and English art, 48, 94, 95, 96
- Frenchified Englishmen, 180, 181
- Frith, W. P., R.A., 1819-1909, his angling picture, painted with Tom Creswick. *See* Creswick.
- Frost and Reed, Messrs., 77
- Furniss, Harry, 87
- Furse, Charles Wellington, A.R.A., 1868-1904. 13, 26, 62, 63, 130, 268

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- "G. M.," *The Young Sportsman's Instructor*, c. 1710. 210, 211
- Gainsborough, Thomas, R.A., 1727-1788. 14, 183, 196
- Gardiner, Samuel, *A Booke of Angling, or Fishing, wherein is shewed, by Conference with Scriptures, the agreement betweene the Fishermen, Fishes, Fishing of both Natures, Temporall, and Spirituall*, London, 1606, 16mo. Three copies of this very notable work are known, one in the Bodleian, another in the Heath Library, the third in the D. B. Fearing Collection.
- Garrard, George, A.R.A., 1760-1826. 180, 182
- Garvin, J. L., on Shakespeare, 26
- Gay Lord Quex, The*, 23
- Geddes, Ewan, R.W.S., 14
- Geddes, William, the late, 14
- Gentleman's Magazine*, 1819, and Lathy, 125
- George III, and British art, 186, 187, 189
- German books, early. The A. N. Gilbert Collection has three of great rarity. One dates from 1589; it is a *Fischbuchlin von der Natur und Eigenschafft der Fischen*, etc., and its second part contains twenty-nine recipes, twenty-seven of which appear to be taken from the two earlier books. These were published by Jacob Kobel, and hitherto have been unknown to bibliographers. The earlier one was sold at Sotherby's on June 30th, 1923. Its dedication is dated Heidelberg, 1508, and its recipes would seem to be the original of the rare little French treatise *Livret Nouveau aug'l sont contenus xxvii Receptz . . . de prendre Poissons*.
- Gesner, and Izaak Walton, 215, 216, 233
- Gibb, Robert, R.S.A., 1801-1837, painted "A River Scene with Fishermen."
- Gilbert, Rene, French painter, 96
- Gilbey, Arthur N., his great collection of fishing books, prints, and pictures, 5, 14, 15, 66, 97, 101, 103, 105, 107, 108, 121, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 139, 184, 189, 190, 197, 201, 207, 269
- Gilbey, the late Sir Walter, his volumes on *Animal Painters*, 101, 103, 147, 152, 180

- Giles, James W., R.S.A., 1801-1870..14, 97, 111, 129. Some of his fishing pictures, which advertising has failed to find: "Salmon Pool at Kinloch Leven" (1865), "Good Sport, Salmonidae of Scotland" (1863), "The Pet Pool" (1856), "Playing a Fish, on the Findhorn" (1853), "The Rod" (1846), "The Angler's Evening" (1844), and "A Day's Fishing" (1840).
- Gillray, James, 1757-1815..142, 174
- Gilpin, Sawrey, R.A., 1733-1807..126, 180
- Girtin, Thomas, 1775-1802..26, 47, 130, 133, 141, 156
- Glanville, Bartholomaeus, *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, fourteenth-century MS. on vellum, Fearing Collection, with a chapter on fishes.
- Goodwin, Albert, R.W.S., 42, 94
- Gordon, Sir John Watson, R.A., P.R.S.A., 1788-1864..176
- Gosden, Thomas, 1780-1840..122-127, 236
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- Grant, Sir Francis, P.R.A., 1803-1878..171
- Graphic, The*, 42
- Green, Valentine, A.R.A., 1739-1813..141
- "Greendrake, Gregory." See Coad, J.
- Greenwood, James, *The Purgatory of Peter the Cruel*, with thirty-six illustrations by Ernest Griset, London, 1868. Several angling scenes and fish.
- Grego, the late Joseph, 137, 138
- Gregory, Edward John, R.A., 1850-1909..31
- Greig, J., engraver, 47
- Grey, of Fallodon, Viscount (Sir Edward Grey), *Fly Fishing*, London, 1899, and other editions.
- Griset, Ernest, graphic humorist, 144¹
- Grundy, C. Reginald, editor of *The Connoisseur*, 99, 269
- Grossmith, Weedon, painter and actor, 72
- Gut, 212, 213; silkworm gut first mentioned, 213
- Guthrie, J. Maule, M.P., owner of Sir George Harvey's famous angling picture, 68; the picture, 68, 69
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- "H. B." (John Doyle), 85, 129. See also illustrations.
- Hacken, Arnold van, his fish pictures, 205
- Hacker, E., 100
- Hackle, Palmer, Esq. See Blakey, Robert, M.D.
- Haden, Francis Seymour, surgeon, etcher, and angler, 7, 11, 78, 155, 156, 157
- Haghe, Louis, P.R.I., 1806-1885..109
- Hale, J. H., *How to Tie Salmon Flies*, London, 1892, 8vo.; and other editions.
- Halford, Frederic M., writer on fishing, *Floating Flies and How to Dress Them*, London, 1886, 8vo.; and other editions—*Dry-Fly Fishing in Theory and Practice*, London, 1889, 8vo.; other editions—*Dry-Fly Entomology*, London, 1897; later editions—*The Dry-fly Man's Handbook*, London, 1813, 8vo.
- Halford, Frederic M., his portrait, 63, 64
- Hall, Dr. H. M., *Idylls of Fishermen*, New York, 1912, a collection of poems of the idyllic kind.
- Hall, Mark, 269
- Hamilton, Edward, M.D., *Recollections of Fly-Fishing*, 1884..36, 54, 55, 155-159, 162-166
- Hamilton, William, R.A., 1751-1801..142
- Hand, T., Morland's pupil and imitator, 176
- Hansard, George Agar, *Trout and Salmon Fishing in Wales*, London, 1834.
- Hardie, Martin, R.E., living artist, 78, 269
- Hardy, Heywood, his picture of "The Gentle Art" was published by Klackner, and he collaborated in a fishing picture with Frank Walton, which was engraved.
- Hardy, T. B., R.B.A., 1842-1897..42
- Hargitt, Edward, R.I., 1835-1895, occasional painter of angling landscapes.
- Hartrick, A. S., living painter, 50, 51
- Harvey, Sir George, P.R.S.A., 1806-1876..7, 13, 68, 69
- Hassell, J., and P. Reinagle, 129, 130
- Hastings, Sir George, and Walton, 232
- Haughton, Moses, Staffordshire, painter of fish, 1734-1804. His pictures are very scarce. Mr. H. T. Sheringham has an interesting example of three trout, a pike, a perch, eels, and some minnows. It is dated 1800. There is another example in Aston Hall.
- Havell, William, occasional painter of angling landscapes, 1782-1857..142
- Hawkins, Sir John, 1719-1789..195. He was buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey. He spoke with a drawl, so wits wrote his epitaph as follows: "Here lies Sir John Hawkins, without his shoes and stawkins."
- Hayes, Edwin, R.I., 1820-1904..42
- Hearne, Thomas, 1744-1817..141, 142, 169
- Heath, Henry, junior, 110
- Heath, James, A.R.A., 1757-1834..110
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- Helme, T., and James Pollard, 103, 129

¹ A series of his fishing skits in the A. N. Gilbey Collection, and a smaller set in the Fearing Collection.

- Hemy, Charles Napier, R.A., 1841-1917..42, 43
 Henderson, William, *Notes and Reminiscences of my Life as an Angler*, London, 1876; *My Life as an Angler*, London, 1879. A charming book.
 Henning, J. F., his graphic studies of fish, 80
 Herkomer, Sir Herbert von, R.A., 1849-1914.. 76
 Hilditch, G., painter, 167
 Hill, Raven, 87
 Hills, John Waller, *A History of Fly Fishing for Trout*, London, Philip Allan, 1921.. 229, 260
 Hilton, W., engraver, 178
 Hilton, William, R.A., 1786-1839. One angling subject by him is a "Pike Fishing," engraved by H. R. Cook, and another is "A Trout Angler," in a print by the same engraver.
 Himely, P., and James Pollard, 103
 Hofland, T. Christopher, 1777-1843, painter and writer.
 Hofland, T. Christopher, *The British Angler's Manual*, London, 1839..157, 159, 162, 163, 167, 168, 169, 170
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¹ There is a variant of this picture in the Beaufoy Collection, perhaps the first study for it, perhaps a copy. Years ago it was relined and, I fear, overcleaned. There are some points of difference between it and the original painting. The loose robe has a different hue of grey; the walking-stick is darker, and the knob is clearly seen; there is no tassle below the white collar; and though the colour of the flesh is approximately the same, the modelling has not the same quiet simplicity.

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- Marston, R. B., *Walton and Some Earlier Writers on Fish and Fishing*, London, 1894.
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¹ An interesting artist concerning whose life and work but little is known at present. In W. G. Strickland's *Dictionary of Irish Artists*, two vols., the dates in his career extend about 1756, when he began to study under James Mannin in the Dublin Society's Drawing School. They end, suddenly, in 1775, when Mullins exhibited for the last time at the Royal Academy, London. Though a man of marked ability, his struggle seems to have been a hard one, for he was obliged to paint many signs. His earliest work was done at Waterford, where he decorated trays and the lids of snuff-boxes, in a business founded by Thomas Wyse. Returning to Dublin, he married the hostess of "The Horseshoe and Magpie," and in 1765 he began to send landscapes to the Irish Society of Artists, who awarded him a premium of ten guineas for the best landscape in the exhibition. Mullins painted "The Return of Telemachus" for Lord Listowel, and helped the Earl of Charlemont to decorate Marino, his lordship's country seat. In 1770, he set up his home in London, and for five years his work was well received at the Royal Academy. Horace Walpole noticed his pictures, buying one landscape, and finding in another the manner of Poelenburgh. In 1773, Mullins exhibited the portrait of a beggar in Wales, and two landscapes painted at or near Llangollen. There are two mezzotints after his work, one being "A Spanish Dog," dating from 1772.

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- Northcote, James, R.A., 1746-1831..188
- North Country Angler*, third edition, Leeds, 1800.
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- Novice, *The Friar, A Comic Legend, dedicated to all Lovers of Angling*, by a Novice, 1851; comic illustrations. A fore-runner of Dendy Sadler's monkish angling subjects.
- Nowel or Nowell, Dr. Alexander, Dean of St. Pauls, etc., 1507-1601..231, 236, 237, 268. See his portrait facing p. 236.
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- Ogden, James, *On Fly Tying*, Cheltenham, 1879, 8vo.; some later editions. A very useful book in the evolution of dry fly-fishing.
- O'Gorman, *The Practice of Angling*, two vols., Dublin, 1845; with portrait of its author, 169
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- Orvis, Charles F., and Cheney, A. Nelson, *Fishing with the Fly*, Vermont, U.S.A., 1883, 12mo.; some later editions.
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 Prout, Samuel, 1783-1852, some angling landscapes, particularly of his first period. Mr. Meatyard, of Museum Street, London, has a good example.
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